DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 091 822 EA 006 176

TITLE	Decentralization 1973: A Second-Year Progress Report.
INSTITUTION	Los Angeles City Schools, Calif. Office of Education and Management Assessment.
PUB DATE	Oct 73
NOTE	96p.; Presented by the Decentralization Task Force to the Los Angeles City Board of Education
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.75 HC-$4.20 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS	*Citizen Participation; City Problems; Community Involvement; *Decentralization; *Decision Making; *School Community Relationship; School Systems; Surveys; *Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	*Los Angeles

ABSTRACT

The Los Angeles City Schools, following a plan of educational renewal, are experiencing major changes through an ongoing, orderly process called "decentralization." To assess the progress being made, a task force study was undertaken to determine what mid-course corrections might be necessary and what additional information might be needed by staff and community about decentralization. Over 70,000 surveys forms were sent to all schools and offices in the district, as well as to the community, with over 32,000 survey forms being completed, returned, and tabulated by computer. In addition, over 5,500 open-ended response sheets were returned. This report is divided into four sections: (1) instructional improvement, (2) local school flexibility, (3) communications, and (4) community participation. A fifth section, open-ended responses, was added when it became apparent that other concerns were being expressed which did not directly relate to specific survey items. (Author/JF)

ED 091822

DECENTRALIZATION 1973

A Second-Year Progress Report

Presented by the Decentralization Task Force to the Los Angeles City Board of Education

October 1973

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DECENTRALIZATION 1973

A Second-Year Progress Report

Office of the Superintendent
Education and Management Assessment
Los Angeles Unified School District

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DECENTRALIZATION 1973

A SECOND-YEAR PROGRESS REPORT

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INTRODUCTION

A Brief History

For nearly four years, Los Angeles' public schools have been undergoing a series of far-reaching changes aimed at revitalizing and strengthening education in the nation's second largest school system.

Many of the major changes that are being carried out under the Los Angeles City Schools' plan of educational renewal are part of an ongoing, orderly process called "decentralization."

The broad goals of this process are to develop ways in which authority for decision-making can be concentrated at the local school and to encourage widespread citizen and staff participation in this local decision-making process.

By viewing the decentralization process as an integral part of educational renewal, the school system hopes to give every school an opportunity to design its own educational program in response to locally determined needs, thus making it possible to improve the quality of education it offers its students.

This concept is the nucleus of a formal plan drawn up for the educational renewal of the school district through decentralization. The plan, based on extensive input from staff and community, was presented to the City Board of Education by a special task force in 1971. Many of the recommendations in the plan were adopted immediately by the Board of Education. Although the other recommendations gained board approval, budget limitations did not permit implementation at that time.

First Assessment

To assess the progress that had been made in the year following adoption of the plan, a second task force study was conducted in 1972. The task force report, entitled Decentralization...One Year Later, was designed to identify specific strengths and weaknesses of decentralization. Findings were based on a wide sampling of opinions from many segments of the school district and resulted in ten task force recommendations to further the progress of decentralization.

Second-Year Study

Assessments are essential to progress in the decentralization process. Therefore, another task force study was undertaken this year to determine how decentralization has progressed to date, what mid-course corrections might be necessary and if staff and community need more information about decentralization.

This second-year study attempted to find out:

--If staff and community see VALUE in the decentralization recommendations already adopted by the Board of Education.

--If staff and community feel PROGRESS is being made in implementing these recommendations.

--If there has been a shift in real authority and decision-making power from a centralized source to the local level.

--If there is a wider involvement of staff and community in the decision-making process at the local school level.

To secure the desired information, a small task force of four teachers and two principals, working with the district's Education and Management Assessment Office, designed and carried out a comprehensive survey earlier this year.

The survey instrument, which focused only on those goals and recommendations already adopted by the board, was field tested. using community and staff members, in a representative sampling of schools (10%).

Suggestions from those taking part in the field test resulted in a number of revisions before the final form was completed by the task force. For example, directions were clarified, certain items were rewritten and a Spanish version was developed.

Over 70,000 survey forms were sent to all schools and offices in the district, as well as to the community. Over 32,000 survey forms were completed and returned. These were tabulated by computer. In addition, over 5,500 open-ended response sheets were returned. With the help of the task force, all of these were read, sorted and analyzed.

Respondents included administrators, teachers, classified employees, members of school-community advisory councils, members of the PTA and others in the school community (including some students).

The first 47 items on the survey were scored by respondents in terms of VALUE and PROGRESS according to the following scale:

? = Don't Know
0 = None
1 = Little
2 = Some
3 = Much
4 = Great

The remaining 14 survey items were evaluated by respondents only in terms of VALUE because they had not yet been implemented by the Board of Education.

Although all respondents retained their anonymity, responses were analyzed in terms of the respondent's primary role as teacher, administrator, classified employee, PTA member, school-community advisory council member or "other." Responses were further identified according to the respondent's years of service in role, his work location, the size of his school, the ethnic composition of his school and his administrative area.

The report that follows is divided into four sections which correspond to the areas covered in the 1972 study, Decentralization...One Year Later. The sections are "Instructional Improvement," "Local School Flexibility," "Communications" and "Community Participation." A fifth section, "Open-Ended Responses," was added when it became apparent that other concerns were being expressed which, though not directly related to specific survey items, were of importance to the district.

To aid in understanding the survey data, detailed interpretations of statistics will not be presented. Instead, responses to each of 61 survey items will be presented in tabular form. These tables show the responses in terms of their numerical frequency and their percentage of the total. The number of "don't know" responses is also indicated for each item, but is not included in the percentages. Because of the "rounding off" process, percentage totals will, in some instances, be greater or less than 100% for a given survey item. An "overview," which reduces the responses to only three categories ("none," "little to some," "much to great"), has been prepared for each survey item to facilitate comparisons.

Comments made by respondents on the open-ended response sheets are included for most survey items. These comments were selected on the basis of their representativeness in terms of content and frequency. In some instances, open-ended responses are not included with a given survey item, either because the item elicited almost no comment or because it was duplicated elsewhere.

Survey response items in each of the four sections are presented in the order in which they appeared on the survey instrument. Survey items 1-9 are the general goals of decentralization; items 10-47 are recommendations that have been implemented; and items 48-61 are unimplemented recommendations. The unimplemented items could be assessed only in terms of value.

Throughout the text, survey items are presented in all capital letters, while open-ended comments are designated by italicized type.

SECTION I

INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT

If the overall worth of decentralization were to be measured by a single yardstick, it might be this question: Is decentralization making schools more responsive to the instructional needs of all youngsters?

Improvement in the quality of instruction remains the ultimate objective of the decentralization process. To satisfy this objective, it is necessary to find out what the instructional needs are at each school and then join together the available human and dollar resources to meet those needs in the best way possible.

Before the wheels of decentralization started turning in Los Angeles, innovation and experimentation for the improvement of instruction were basically centralized responsibilities. Although staff and community were given opportunities to present suggestions and ideas, planning for change was essentially a centralized effort.

This approach came under close scrutiny during the 1960's as the diversity of the instructional needs of students became more apparent. It was felt that many traditional programs might be too narrow in scope, too limited in their utility and too slow in responding to the realities of the times.

By the mid-1960's both staff and community began expressing a desire to alter the established pattern of education so the school system might become more effective in meeting the challenges confronting it. It became clear that outmoded instructional programs should be replaced by programs more suited to local needs and aspirations.

Community and local staff stated their desire to be involved in planning and designing new instructional programs that would be more responsive to local priorities.

These concerns led to the development by staff and community of a number of steps that could be taken to improve instruction. These steps were incorporated into the plan for decentralization which was presented to the Board of Education in 1971. The board approved 18 specific proposals and 3 general goals directed at instructional improvement. Of the 18 recommendations, 11 have been put into operation. The others await necessary funding.

This section of the survey shows how more than 30,000 staff and community respondents feel about these goals and recommendations in terms of their VALUE and the PROGRESS that has been made in implementing them.

General Goals

The first three items in this section (Items 1, 7 and 8) are among the district's nine general goals of decentralization. In each case, more than 70% of the respondents gave them a "much to great" value rating. The assessment of progress generally fell into the "little to some" range as the data in the first three tables indicate. Among the respondents, community groups saw considerably more progress being made in implementing the instructional goals than did certificated personnel. This reaction holds true on all survey items included in this section.

HELP SCHOOLS PRESENT AN EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM SUITED TO LOCAL NEEDS
(Survey Item 1)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
3 %	7 %	18 %	27 %	45 %	Percentage
941	2,045	5,140	7,591	12,831	Number
3% NONE	25% LITTLE TO SOME		72% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,598 RESPONSES + 2,452 DON'T KNOWS = 31,050 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
8 %	23 %	42 %	19%	7 %	Percentage
2,143	5,996	10,688	4,938	1,921	Number
8% NONE	65% LITTLE TO SOME		25% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

25,686 RESPONSES + 4,966 DON'T KNOWS = 30,652 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 1)

This general goal of decentralization was consistently supported by all responding groups. Community groups were especially enthusiastic. For example, 80% of the school-community advisory council members and 78% of the PTA members who responded gave it a "much to great" value rating. Of all the respondents, only 3% saw "no" value in this goal. Community groups also saw more evidence of progress in implementing this goal than did other respondents.

The high level of approval given to this goal, as well as to the other two general goals related to instructional improvement (Survey Items 7 and 8), is reflected by the absence of open-ended comments.

RAISE THE SCHOOL SYSTEM'S EFFICIENCY AND ECONOMY TO THE HIGHEST LEVEL POSSIBLE (Survey Item 7)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
7 %	8 %	13 %	20 %	52 %	Percentage
1,924	2,198	3,768	5,705	14,896	Number
7% NONE	21% LITTLE TO SOME		72% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,491 RESPONSES + 2,286 DON'T KNOWS = 30,777 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
23 %	29 %	28 %	12 %	8 %	Percentage
5,865	7,460	7,172	3,010	1,987	Number
23% NONE	57% LITTLE TO SOME		20% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

25,494 RESPONSES + 5,171 DON'T KNOWS = 30,665 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 7)

As with the previous goal, this item was strongly supported in terms of value by every group. More than 80% of the community respondents found "much to great" value in this goal. Although greater evidence of progress was seen by community groups than by certificated staff, the overall opinion of progress was lower than on any other goal.

Open-ended comments on this item reflected a variety of concerns:

...waste and duplication in the building and maintenance department.

...teacher-administrator ratio should be brought in line.

...to decentralize central services is not economical... entails hiring many more people to do the job.

...things are still very slow.

EMPHASIZE THE KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE AS A CONTINUOUS AND COORDINATED EDUCATION PROGRAM (Survey Item 8)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	7 %	15 %	23 %	50 %	Percentage
1,435	1,982	4,048	6,624	14,194	Number
5% NONE	22% LITTLE TO SOME		73% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,283 RESPONSES + 2,505 DON'T KNOWS = 30,788 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
17 %	27 %	31 %	16 %	9 %	Percentage
4,294	6,722	7,628	3,886	2,294	Number
17% NONE	58% LITTLE TO SOME		25% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

24,824 RESPONSES + 5,857 DON'T KNOWS = 30,681 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 8)

The need to break down artificial barriers between grade levels received strong support as a decentralization goal. While nearly three-fourths of all respondents saw "much to great" value in this goal, only one-fourth felt there was "much to great" progress being made. Although the various responding groups concurred on the value of this goal, certificated staff again reported less evidence of progress.

The open-ended responses included some complaints that instructional supervisors were spread too thin and that they didn't or couldn't have a wide enough background of experience to be effective in a K-12 instructional leadership role. The following open-ended comments illustrate these concerns:

> *Is there a consultant? Why doesn't he offer his services?*
>
> *Subject consultants must be made available on the secondary level--in this area decentralization has hurt us.*
>
> *The crossover of consultants/supervisors/coordinators from elementary to secondary seems to have been made with very little thought of the individual's degree of experience and understanding of the secondary school structure. Their leadership without this understanding becomes merely academic and their suggestions unrealistic.*
>
> *...feel loss of personal contact with K-12...*

Since each of the three general goals in this section was strongly supported by each of the six responding groups, the most significant finding is the gap that occurs between the value and progress ratings.

Implemented Recommendations

There was less uniformity of response to the items dealing with recommendations for instructional improvement. Eleven recommendations have been adopted and implemented to achieve some of the instructional improvement goals. Of these, nine received "much to great" value ratings, while the remaining two were in the "little to some" category. Progress for all eleven was generally placed in the "little to some" category.

INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS NEEDED BY SCHOOLS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BY THE DISTRICT CURRICULUM STAFF WHEN REQUESTED (Survey Item 10)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
5 %	8 %	18 %	29 %	40 %	Percentage	18 %	29 %	31 %	15 %	7 %
1,496	2,135	4,906	7,847	10,896	Number	4,067	6,389	6,819	3,250	1,521
5% NONE	26% LITTLE TO SOME		69% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	18% NONE	60% LITTLE TO SOME		22% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,280 RESPONSES + 3,594 DON'T KNOWS = 30,874 TOTAL RESPONSES

22,046 RESPONSES + 8,649 DON'T KNOWS = 30,695 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 10)

This recommendation was supported by all responding groups, who placed it in the "much to great" range. Classified employees saw the greatest evidence of progress; certificated staff the least. More than half of the teachers (53%) saw "little" or "no" progress.

Open-ended comments revealed that although certificated staff supported the recommendation, they felt they could develop instructional materials in the local school if they had sufficient time and equipment. Some representative comments were:

Too much is being done centrally.

If instructional materials mean unit lessons and plans, teachers can best do this themselves.

Each school should develop its own curriculum center.

Materials...should be developed by individual schools.

I feel if there is a specific need for materials for a school they should be developed by teachers in the school using the resources of the district--both materiel and personnel and given released time to do so.

ACCOUNTABILITY FOR STAFF DEVELOPMENT (IN-SERVICE TRAINING IN THE AREAS OF ADMINISTRATION, THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM OR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION) MUST BE CLEARLY ESTABLISHED (Survey Item 11)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
6 %	9 %	19 %	29 %	38 %	Percentage	16 %	27 %	32 %	17 %	8 %
1,543	2,355	5,255	8,006	10,333	Number	3,701	6,382	7,390	4,050	1,866
6% NONE	28% LITTLE TO SOME		67% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	16% NONE	59% LITTLE TO SOME		25% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,492 RESPONSES + 3,348 DON'T KNOWS = 30,840 TOTAL RESPONSES

23,389 RESPONSES + 7,262 DON'T KNOWS = 30,651 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 11)

Administrators saw considerable value in the area of establishing accountability for staff development, with 82% of the respondents placing this recommendation in the "much to great" value column. Community groups also rated this item higher than the overall average.

Teachers, on the other hand, while still placing this recommendation in the "much to great" value range, were slightly less supportive (63%, "much to great") than other groups. At the same time, teachers and administrators felt less progress was being made than did the other responding groups.

Open-ended comments usually reflected concerns about how to establish accountability and to whom administrators should be accountable. Comments included:

...of great value--the administrator's responsibility.

...accountability to whom? the state? If the community, who are the community?

...depends on HOW and BY WHOM?

...once reliable methods are developed.

...will only have meaning when the staff determines what development is needed.

Accountability seems to be taken as a joke. It's obvious that many teachers are falling on their faces--but nothing is done about it.

IN-SERVICE CLASSES FOR TEACHERS SHOULD BE PART OF ANY PLAN FOR INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT (Survey Item 12)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
3 %	5 %	13 %	24 %	55 %	Percentage	14 %	26 %	31 %	18 %	11 %
943	1,407	3,724	7,014	16,195	Number	3,599	6,777	7,961	4,517	2,863
3% NONE	18% LITTLE TO SOME		79% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	14% NONE	57% LITTLE TO SOME		29% MUCH TO GREAT	

29,285 RESPONSES + 1,648 DON'T KNOWS = 30,933 TOTAL RESPONSES

25,729 RESPONSES + 4,997 DON'T KNOWS = 30,726 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 12)

Particularly significant is the fact that 55% of all respondents gave this recommendation a value rating of "great." Teachers concurred with the value endorsement of other groups, but again saw less evidence of progress. Administrators led all groups in their value rating (82%, "much to great").

There seemed to be little correlation between the respondent's length of service and the value he attributed to in-service training although less experienced respondents tended to see more progress.

Open-ended comments expressed concern that such training not infringe upon out-of-school teacher time and that participants be paid. Others withheld judgments of value until they could ascertain the quality of the training. Among the comments were:

Colleges do fine. I'd rather spend district money on tables and custodial service. Also, I'm chronically out of chalk.

Don't feel in-service classes are as pertinent...as they used to be.

...relevant in-service.

Instructor should be qualified...we need IDEAS related to what we are teaching.

In-service classes in general are a bore and an intellectual waste of time.

IN-SERVICE CLASSES FOR ADMINISTRATORS SHOULD BE PART OF ANY PLAN FOR INSTRUCTIONAL IMPROVEMENT (Survey Item 13)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
3 %	5 %	14 %	26 %	52 %	Percentage	19 %	23 %	29 %	17 %	12 %
939	1,355	3,878	7,169	14,241	Number	3,660	4,371	5,375	3,188	2,268
3% NONE	19% LITTLE TO SOME		78% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	19% NONE	52% LITTLE TO SOME		29% MUCH TO GREAT	
27,082 RESPONSES	+ 2,854 DON'T KNOWS	= 29,936 TOTAL RESPONSES				18,862 RESPONSES	+ 11,682 DON'T KNOWS	= 30,544 TOTAL RESPONSES		

(Survey Item 13)

A comparison of the data with that on the preceding chart (Survey Item 12) shows the similarity of the overall response. Administrators generally agreed on the value of in-service classes for themselves (90%,"much to great"). Teachers and community also gave this recommendation high value scores, but teachers again saw the least evidence of progress. The large number of "don't know" responses on the progress assessment is especially significant on this item.

In the open-ended comments, some teachers prescribed "getting back into the classroom" as the best in-service training for administrators. Some respondents said:

Classroom teaching for administrators, most particularly those in downtown offices.

Administrators need to be more involved in the classroom.

SCHOOL STAFF SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DETERMINING INSTRUCTIONAL PRIORITIES (Survey Item 14)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
2 %	3 %	10 %	22 %	63 %	Percentage
569	891	2,898	6,561	18,280	Number
2% NONE	13% LITTLE TO SOME		85% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

29,199 RESPONSES + 1,265 DON'T KNOWS = 30,464 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
11 %	22 %	32 %	21 %	13%	Percentage
2,939	5,830	8,419	5,620	3,397	Number
11% NONE	54% LITTLE TO SOME		34% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

26,205 RESPONSES + 4,282 DON'T KNOWS = 30,487 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 14)

This recommendation led all others in the respondents' assessment of value and in progress. The total number of responses was the second largest on the survey, and the "don't know" value response was very small (4%). All groups (community as well as staff) placed considerably higher value on staff involvement than on community involvement in determining instructional priorities.

Open-ended comments generally supported the recommendation:

> *...staff suggestions should be solicited and carefully considered.*
>
> *...more staff involvement is badly needed.*

SECONDARY STUDENTS SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DETERMINING INSTRUCTIONAL PRIORITIES (Survey Item 15)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
14 %	16 %	31 %	19 %	19 %	Percentage
3,720	4,356	8,223	5,116	5,133	Number
14% NONE	47% LITTLE TO SOME		38% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

26,548 RESPONSES + 3,385 DON'T KNOWS = 29,933 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
27 %	31 %	29 %	9 %	4 %	Percentage
5,020	5,722	5,265	1,633	777	Number
27% NONE	60% LITTLE TO SOME		13% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

18,417 RESPONSES + 11,400 DON'T KNOWS = 29,817 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 15)

In contrast to the preceding item, this recommendation was given a value rating below the "much to great" rating by 63% of the respondents. No item in this section received lower value and progress ratings. There was no single group (school or community) with a majority of respondents who placed this item in the "much to great" value range. The school-community advisory council respondents gave the highest rating of all, with 46% of the council respondents seeing "much to great" value in this recommendation.

The open-ended comments which follow reflect the relatively low value accorded this recommendation.

> *...unfortunately, students have too much say in priorities... result: we have a fun school.*
>
> *...students are not adult and mature enough...*
>
> *...too inexperienced...but their opinion should be sought... and taken into consideration.*
>
> *...secondary teenagers...are unable to realize changes which will occur in their lives...*

COMMUNITY SHOULD BE INVOLVED IN DETERMINING INSTRUCTIONAL PRIORITIES (Survey Item 16)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
12 %	17 %	34 %	19 %	19 %	Percentage
3,523	4,836	9,766	5,576	5,432	Number
12% NONE	51% LITTLE TO SOME		38% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

29,133 RESPONSES + 1.615 DON'T KNOWS = 30,784 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
19 %	30 %	33 %	12 %	6 %	Percentage
4,548	7,375	8,141	2,955	1,388	Number
19% NONE	63% LITTLE TO SOME		18% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

24,407 RESPONSES + 6,226 DON'T KNOWS = 30,633 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 16)

Responses to this recommendation were almost identical to those given Survey Item 15. The main difference in the data indicates that the "don't know" responses in both value and progress drop sharply when respondents considered the concept of community rather than students being involved in determining instructional priorities.

Contrary to what might be expected, community respondents were not overwhelmingly affirmative in favoring the value of this recommendation.

The value assessment by the community groups was as follows:

	None	Little to Some	Much to Great
Advisory Council	7%	37%	57%
PTA	9%	48%	42%

This contrasts sharply with Survey Item 14 (which proposes staff involvement), where 85% of the community respondents saw "much to great" value in this recommendation.

Open-ended comments for the three preceding items (14, 15 and 16) may be summarized by the following remarks:

> *...community should be involved but should not dictate.*
>
> *Community input is necessary...but the decisions should be left to the teachers since they have had the education and training.*
>
> *I believe as a parent that we should be involved and informed, but we must leave technical decisions to trained personnel.*

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DISTRICT-WIDE INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN SHOULD PROVIDE FOR INPUT FROM BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY (Survey Item 17)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
6 %	9 %	25 %	27 %	33 %	Percentage
1,692	2,479	6,660	7,137	8,817	Number
6% NONE	34% LITTLE TO SOME		60% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

26,785 RESPONSES + 3,976 DON'T KNOWS = 30,761 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
24 %	33 %	28 %	10 %	6 %	Percentage
4,353	5,920	4,972	1,727	1,014	Number
24% NONE	61% LITTLE TO SOME		16% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

17,986 RESPONSES + 12,728 DON'T KNOWS = 30,714 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 17)

All groups gave at least moderate support to this recommendation, with 60% of the respondents seeing "much to great" value in it. Respondents from the area of adult education were considerably more enthusiastic with 71% of them attaching "much to great" value to the item. The "don't know" progress response was especially high. There appeared to be some reluctance among community members and teachers to permit business and industry to become deeply involved in the instructional program. This hesitancy was more evident in responses from the elementary school level than from the secondary school level.

Open-ended comments expressed concern over the extent to which business and industry might influence the instructional program. There was also some doubt that "district-wide" instructional plans could be compatible with the philosophy of decentralization. Among the comments were:

What about labor?

...what would business and industry be allowed?

...incongruent with the concept of decentralization...

...item contrary to decentralization goals. Popular--but costly.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A DISTRICT-WIDE INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN SHOULD PROVIDE FOR INPUT FROM COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES (Survey Item 18)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
3 %	7 %	22 %	29 %	39 %	Percentage	18 %	29 %	31 %	14 %	7 %
959	1,863	6,003	8,131	10,652	Number	3,460	5,539	5,952	2,630	1,326
3% NONE	29% LITTLE TO SOME		68% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	18% NONE	60% LITTLE TO SOME		21% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,608	+	3,208	=	30,816		18,913	+	11,802	=	30,715
RESPONSES		DON'T KNOWS		TOTAL RESPONSES		RESPONSES		DON'T KNOWS		TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 18)

Although this item is closely related to the preceding item, it received a more positive endorsement. Only a very small percentage (3%) of respondents saw "no" value in this recommendation.

Few open-ended comments were submitted on this item. However, there were a few respondents who expressed uneasiness about stronger school-university ties. For example:

Colleges have too much influence on high school programming.

...colleges have no idea of our problem and should stay out of elementary...

GOVERNMENTAL AGENCIES AND PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS SHOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO PROVIDE FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORT FOR THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM
(Survey Item 19)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	5 %	14 %	22 %	54 %	Percentage
1,495	1,365	4,029	6,349	15,344	Number
5% NONE	19% LITTLE TO SOME		76% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,627 RESPONSES + 2,256 DON'T KNOWS = 30,883 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
17 %	29 %	30 %	12 %	11 %	Percentage
3,508	5,978	6,168	2,476	2,284	Number
17% NONE	59% LITTLE TO SOME		23% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

20,419 RESPONSES + 10,330 DON'T KNOWS = 30,749 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 19)

This recommendation received an unusually high and uniform "much to great" value response (76%). Progress was reported by 83% of the respondents. However, the "don't know" responses on progress were frequent on this item.

Despite the consistently high endorsement of the value of this recommendation, open-ended responses often warned about involvement of government agencies in the educational program. Here are some comments:

Must be without strings; grass root control is always preferable to oligopoly.

This should be separate from government agency funding.

Government agencies maybe; private foundations never!

Question...should separate government and private sources of funding. I favor the first, not the second.

Private agencies YES--Government NO.

Support--Yes; dictate what is to be taught--No.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INSTRUCTIONAL PLANS SHOULD BE EVALUATED REGULARLY
(Survey Item 20)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
2 %	4 %	13 %	27 %	34 %	Percentage	9 %	23 %	36 %	20 %	12 %
700	1,164	3,826	7,861	16,051	Number	2,344	5,744	8,796	4,945	2,885
2% NONE	17% LITTLE TO SOME		81% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	9% NONE	59% LITTLE TO SOME		32% MUCH TO GREAT	

29,602 RESPONSES + 1,310 DON'T KNOWS = 30,912 TOTAL RESPONSES

24,724 RESPONSES + 5,989 DON'T KNOWS = 29,713 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 20)

This item, which is the last of the implemented recommendations included in this section, received high value approval, with more than 80% of the respondents placing it in the "much to great" column. Progress was also given a higher rating than for most items in this section.

This item also produced many comments expressing concerns about the "how and by whom" aspects of evaluation. Comments included:

How? By whom? How is effectiveness defined?

Not just with IBM cards or programmed tests but through discussion with parents, teachers--and staff.

Many times programs are evaluated and rejected before sufficient time has elapsed for any change to take place.

Plenty of evaluation going on--more than enough. Now do something to put into effect suggestions made.

Some programs are evaluated with too little time to measure effectiveness...

There is no question about the value of regular evaluation. The question is: How much do we make use of the evaluation after time and money are invested in it?

Unimplemented Recommendations

The remaining seven recommendations for instructional improvement were among those approved by the Board of Education but not implemented because of insufficient funds. Nevertheless, respondents were asked to rate these recommendations according to value with the hope that this information would be useful in establishing priorities when implementation is feasible. Each of these recommendations was seen as having "much to great" value by a majority of the respondents. A more detailed analysis follows.

A SUPERINTENDENT'S FUND FOR INNOVATION WOULD ENCOURAGE PERSONNEL TO SEEK ALTERNATIVE SOLUTIONS TO EDUCATIONAL PROBLEMS (Survey Item 49)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	8%	9 %	20 %	25 %	37 %
Number	2,118	2,369	5,119	6,427	9,452
Overview	8% NONE	29% LITTLE TO SOME		62% MUCH TO GREAT	

25,485 RESPONSES + 5,262 DON'T KNOWS = 30,747 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 49)

This recommendation received support from all groups. There was little relation between the value assigned to this item and such variables as ethnicity, school, level, location, etc. However, the 5,262 "don't know" responses suggest considerable uncertainty about the purpose of this recommendation.

Open-ended comments also revealed a lack of understanding about this recommendation. Respondents wanted to know who would have the final say in dispensing the funds, whether or not schools would try to *"out innovate"* each other in order to secure money.

Concerns were also expressed that funds might be taken away from something else in order to implement this recommendation. The spectrum of concerns is revealed by these comments:

Depends on guidelines and controls. Could be fantastic or disastrous.

Operations removed from central bureaucracy have a better chance of being innovative.

I am afraid this may encourage change for change's sake and begin a school-to-school feeling of let's see who can out-innovate.

Far too many experimentations. Teachers are asked to try so many things, they barely have time to do their own work...traditional program which has worked is in danger of being scuttled.

...long overdue.

THE DISTRICT SHOULD MAKE AVAILABLE A PRE-KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM FOR ALL CHILDREN IN THE DISTRICT FROM AGE 3 YEARS 9 MONTHS TO 4 YEARS 9 MONTHS (Survey Item 50)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	19 %	9 %	14 %	17 %	42 %
Number	5,083	2,323	3,881	4,656	11,330
Overview	19% NONE	23% LITTLE TO SOME		59% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,273 RESPONSES + 3,060 DON'T KNOWS = 30,333 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 50)

There was a wider fluctuation of opinion among the responding groups--particularly in relation to the ethnicity of their respective schools --on this recommendation. Respondents from predominantly minority schools tended to place a significantly higher value on this concept. For example, in the "much to great" value category, the school ethnic distribution was: predominantly Black--73%; predominantly Oriental--60%; predominantly Spanish surname--65%; and predominantly other white--46%. PTA members valued this recommendation less than other groups did, although almost half (49%) of the PTA respondents saw "much to great" value. Elementary respondents placed a higher value on this item than did those from secondary schools.

Many of the open-ended comments questioned the wisdom of allocating educational dollars to this program when, in the respondent's view, other programs with a higher priority were being neglected. Comments covered a wide area as shown by these examples:

...providing there are adequate funds for K-12.

...only if there is a teacher and a paid aide for every 15 children.

A pre-K program should be made available for all children but not mandatory.

The value of preschool education should be demonstrated to the community.

...only in specific areas where children are greatly lacking in readiness experiences.

I would prefer to see any extra money we have go toward music enrichment, art enrichment, etc., rather than have to pay for additional teachers to teach pre-kindergarten children.

Information could be given to parents of pre-kindergarten age children as to how they can best help their children at home.

It is felt that the school system is not to be made available for babysitting--but should provide the old school type pre-kindergarten to prepare children who will be entering kindergarten the following year. To provide nursery services is NOT my idea of the system's responsibility.

Absolutely NOT. Children belong at home and getting love from mother.

The best recommendation for our future.

Need is very great.

Very valuable recommendation.

TEACHERS NEWLY ASSIGNED TO HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS (MANY PROBLEMS AND NEEDS) SHOULD BE PROVIDED WITH A PAID FIVE-DAY STAFF DEVELOPMENT (TRAINING) PROGRAM (Survey Item 53)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	7 %	6 %	13 %	23 %	31 %
Number	1,854	1,562	3,661	6,238	14,132
Overview	7% NONE	19% LITTLE TO SOME		74% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,443 RESPONSES + 3,223 DON'T KNOWS = 30,666 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 53)

This item received the highest "much to great" response (74%) of any unimplemented recommendation in this section. The "don't know" and "no" value responses were small. Although community responses were very favorable toward this recommendation, certificated staff gave it an even greater endorsement.

Comments usually indicated that the program should be conducted in all schools--not just those labeled "high need." For instance:

All staff members need this!

Teachers need all the help they can get.

All teachers should be provided with a paid staff development program--three to five days before school opens.

Teachers newly assigned to problem areas need in-service to acquaint them with the customs, ideas, interests, ways, problems and psychology of the area.

...new teachers should be prepared prior to school assignment.

ADDITIONAL COUNSELORS FOR ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO EACH OF THE 12 AREAS. (ELEMENTARY SCHOOL RESPONSE ONLY)
(Survey Item 57)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	9 %	6 %	11 %	18 %	55 %
Number	1,535	1,114	1,969	3,096	9,524
Overview	9% NONE	17% LITTLE TO SOME		73% MUCH TO GREAT	

17,238 RESPONSES + 2,467 DON'T KNOWS = 19,705 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 57)

Respondents highly favored this recommendation for elementary school counselors. More than half (55%) of the responses were in the highest category of "great" value. The strong endorsement of this recommendation underscores the high priority placed by staff and community on the need for the early identification of students with special learning difficulties, with special problems and with special abilities.

Concerns about this issue most often related to the skills and the roles of counselors as these examples show:

...should be given top priority.

...their job should be counseling, not just testing.

Absolutely! Positively! Definitely! There are many children waiting years to be tested and counseled.

Most counselors that we've gotten were people from higher social standards that didn't know or understand the problems or needs that exist (especially in ghetto neighborhoods).

Quality should be emphasized more than quantity.

Let's have some counselors who do some counseling and work with children.

Need is...effective counselors--ones who care and act.

ADDITIONAL COUNSELORS SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON AN ENROLLMENT BASIS. (SECONDARY SCHOOL RESPONSE ONLY) (Survey Item 58)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	12 %	8 %	15 %	22 %	44 %
Number	1,592	1,000	1,939	2,87?	5,732
Overview	12% NONE	23% LITTLE TO SOME			66% MUCH TO GREAT

13,135 RESPONSES + 2,322 DON'T KNOWS = 15,457 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 58)

Although the assignment of additional counselors in secondary schools was received less favorably than the previous item, a wide majority (66%) of the secondary respondents felt this recommendation had "much to great" value.

Open-ended comments may explain why somewhat moderately lower value was placed on secondary school counselors in comparison to their elementary counterparts. Respondents were particulary concerned that the counselor not be relegated to the role of recordkeeper or program clerk. They were also concerned over "enrollment" rather than "need" as the criterion for assigning counselors. Comments include:

Our school is overloaded with counselors and I haven't seen any great change in the behavior and motivation of the children.

Desirable...but by no means a high priority.

...hire competent counselors...rather than clerks who look at enrollment numbers only.

URBAN TEACHER SPECIALISTS (SELECTED TEACHERS WHOSE BACKGROUND, TRAINING, AND EXPERIENCE ESPECIALLY QUALIFIES THEM TO WORK WITH CHILDREN IN HIGH-NEED SCHOOLS) ARE AN IMPORTANT STAFF REQUIREMENT AND SHOULD RECEIVE ADDITIONAL SALARY (Survey Item 59)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	13%	8%	17%	22%	41%
Number	3,631	2,100	4,591	5,973	11,460
Overview	13% NONE	25% LITTLE TO SOME		63% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,755 RESPONSES + 3,008 DON'T KNOWS = 30,763 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 59)

The concept of the urban teacher specialist is another proposed way of attracting and retaining experienced teachers in "high-need" schools. Responses showed little relationship between the ethnicity of the respondent's school and his endorsement of this recommendation. However, respondents from predominantly minority schools were slightly more supportive.

This recommendation received an unusually high number of open-ended comments. Concerns revolved around a more precise definition of "special qualifications" and the sincerity of teachers who would go to or remain in high-need schools for monetary reasons. The range of comments included:

...should be implemented immediately.

You age faster in a high need area; let it be for the love of teaching, not for monetary reason.

Unequivocally NO! This district must not become a party to...this apparent attempt to begin "combat pay" or "reward pay."

...could be demoralizing to other staff. Suggest lighten load, shorter day...as alternative...

If salary is...only motivation, let them stay where they are.

I do not favor singling out some inner-city teachers over the rest...

...greatly needed in some high schools.

TEACHERS WHO MEET THE NEED TO COMMUNICATE BILINGUALLY IN THE LEARNING PROCESS SHOULD RECEIVE ADDITIONAL SALARY (Survey Item 60)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	19%	19%	19%	19%	33%
Number	5,402	2,821	5,393	5,475	9,293
Overview	19% NONE	2[illegible]% LITTLE TO SOME		52% MUCH TO GREAT	

28,384 RESPONSES + 2,585 DON'T KNOWS = 30,969 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 60)

Although this item was not among those recommendations receiving great high value, it did receive consistently solid support from all groups. As might be expected, this recommendation was supported more enthusiastically by respondents from schools in which there were high percentages of Spanish-surname students. However, it also received support from all predominantly minority schools and all geographic areas.

The open-ended comments on this item paralleled concerns expressed about the urban teacher specialist. Among the comments were:

Whatever happened to old-fashioned prefessionalism without the need for extra reward?

Absolutely not--at least until such time as Congress has decreed that the USA is a bilingual nation.

Spanish should be a requirement for all teachers.

Bilingual teachers should NOT receive additional pay. Many teachers bring other special talents to the classroom and they are not...remunerated.

It would be very hard to determine which...abilities or talents deserve extra pay. Knowing a foreign language is only one.

Does this mean that pay should be based on a college major?

Additional Comments

There were many open-ended comments about instructional improvement that did not relate to a specific survey item. A sampling of these shows some of the main concerns:

With all of the attention "career education" is receiving at the national, state and district level, our school is not responding.

I also would like to know why Los Angeles City does not have more educationally handicapped classes. There are only a few and it is almost impossible to have anyone placed in them.

If a teacher has 30 to 40 students in each class, he can't give any individual help to pupils who need it. The system is failing if our children are graduating from high school without the ability to read and write.

Where has all the money gone??!! How come my classes can't take trips, too?

The decentralization of the library and audio-visual units was a big mistake.

More emphasis should be placed on the basics, as the tests have proven: methods to improve and insure the pupil's knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic in 12 years.

I see no need for frequent changes in texts, especially music, health and science. We barely become familiar with the text and then it is changed--usually not for the better.

I would like to stress the need for lower class norms, more counselors in the elementary schools, teacher enrichment specialists, released time for teachers to visit other schools and observe alternative teaching approaches.

Teachers need nothing...only fewer kids.

General Observations

Recommendations related to instructional improvement were generally thought to have "much to great" value.

Progress on recommendations was viewed as being in the "little to some" range.

Community respondents usually found more evidence of progress than did staff.

There was considerable disparity between the assessment of value and progress on most of the recommendations.

In-service and staff development programs for teachers and administrators were strongly endorsed.

Responses revealed that staff welcomes input from the community related to the overall instructional program, but wants to retain responsibility for final decisions and specific recommendations in the area of instruction.

The following recommendations received particularly strong and widespread support:

In-service training for teachers newly assigned to high-need schools.

The assignment of additional counselors in elementary and secondary schools.

The concept of an urban teacher specialist position.

The involvement of school staff in determining instructional priorities.

Efforts to enlist additional funding and support from governmental and private agencies for instructional programs.

Improved procedures for regularly evaluating the effectiveness of instructional plans.

SECTION II

LOCAL SCHOOL FLEXIBILITY

Local school staffs and communities have long been seeking greater freedom to respond to the educational needs of their school. The need for increased local flexibility stems from the belief that those who are closest to the student--his parents, teachers, principal and others--are best able to judge what is needed in a given school or classroom. In keeping with this idea of more local flexibility, local staff and community have desired greater control over the funds budgeted for their school. They have also urged that the focus of decision-making be shifted as much as possible to a local level and that central and area staff be more responsive to the needs of local schools.

As a result, one of the primary objectives of decentralization in Los Angeles has been an attempt to provide more of this kind of flexibility at the local school level. The goals and recommendations which follow reflect some of the district's efforts to:

--Provide for and promote diversity and innovation in programs which respond to locally determined needs.

--Delegate authority and decision-making power to the lowest practical level.

--Encourage the broadest possible involvement by staff and community in the decision-making process.

General Goals

Four of the nine general goals of decentralization are related to local school flexibility (Survey Items 2, 3, 5, 6). In each case, respondents felt these goals had "much to great" value and that "little to some" progress was being made in achieving them.

INCREASE THE RESPONSIVENESS OF SCHOOLS AND THE SCHOOL SYSTEM (Survey Item 2)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	10 %	22 %	29 %	34 %	Percentage
1,303	2,635	6,054	8,160	9,166	Number
5% NONE	32% LITTLE TO SOME		63% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

27,318 RESPONSES + 3,163 DON'T KNOWS = 30,481 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
11 %	26 %	39 %	18 %	6 %	Percentage
2,857	6,549	9,818	4,386	1,447	Number
11% NONE	65% LITTLE TO SOME		24% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

25,057 RESPONSES + 5,516 DON'T KNOWS = 30,573 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 2)

The value of this general goal was supported by all responding groups, with administrators and community members seeing the most value. Teachers gave it the least value and progress of the six responding groups. The value assessment was lower for this goal than it was for the other eight general goals of decentralization.

Few respondents chose to comment on this item. Those who did said:

Difference between the responsiveness of individual school and school system is vast.

Responsiveness to what? Children's needs, community pressure?

Increase responsiveness to whom?...the needs of students I hope.

EXTEND MORE AUTONOMY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR EFFECTIVE DECISION-MAKING TO LOCAL SCHOOLS (Survey Item 3)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
4 %	8 %	20 %	31 %	38 %	Percentage
1,170	2,241	5,566	8,760	10,770	Number
4% NONE	26% LITTLE TO SOME		69% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,507 RESPONSES + 2,111 DON'T KNOWS = 30,618 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
9 %	24 %	38 %	22 %	7 %	Percentage
2,475	6,172	10,050	5,700	1,868	Number
9% NONE	62% LITTLE TO SOME		29% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

26,265 RESPONSES + 4,318 DON'T KNOWS = 30,583 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 3)

Community and staff have generally agreed that decision-making should be located at the local school level to the greatest extent possible. This goal is perhaps the most closely related to the entire concept of local school flexibility. With more than two-thirds of the survey respondents giving this a value rating of "much to great," the desire for increased local autonomy is clear. It is also significant that progress was seen by 91% of all respondents.

Since the movement toward greater local school flexibility often imposes additional responsibilities on personnel at the school level, new manpower and monetary problems may arise. Open-ended responses to this item revealed concerns about these problems.

> *We at the schools are now doing much of the work formerly done downtown and we have not been compensated time-wise.*
>
> *Too much autonomy and decision making doesn't allow the teacher time to teach or prepare for teaching.*
>
> *Not enough autonomy has been given to schools...not so many directives from the "hill."*

ENCOURAGE DESIRABLE CHANGE AND INNOVATION (Survey Item 5)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
3 %	7 %	19 %	28 %	43 %	Percentage
901	2,006	5,392	8,061	12,482	Number
3% NONE	26% LITTLE TO SOME		71% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,842 RESPONSES + 1,815 DON'T KNOWS = 30,657 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
10 %	25 %	38 %	19 %	8 %	Percentage
2,697	6,623	10,374	5,219	2,055	Number
10% NONE	63% LITTLE TO SOME		27% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

26,968 RESPONSES + 3,684 DON'T KNOWS = 30,652 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 5)

Respondents gave this survey item the highest value rating of any of the four goals in this section. Only 3% of the respondents saw "no" value.

Open-ended comments, while basically supportive, revealed two areas of concern: (1) Who would judge whether or not changes were desirable? and (2) Is there too much emphasis on "innovation" in areas in which results have not yet been verified? Representative comments include the following:

> *...whose definition of desirable?*

...Don't go too far until results of new programs are verified.

Desirable change is good. Innovation is not always desirable.

It depends on the type of innovation.

Not enough innovation is allowed...if it is for the benefit of the children...why not let them "do their thing."

ESTABLISH MEANS FOR CONTINUAL REEVALUATION OF EACH SCHOOL'S PRIORITIES (Survey Item 6)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
4 %	8 %	21 %	31 %	36 %	Percentage
1,088	2,332	6,029	8,737	10,032	Number
4% NONE	29% LITTLE TO SOME		67% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,218 RESPONSES + 2,489 DON'T KNOWS = 30,702 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
11 %	26 %	37 %	20 %	7 %
2,892	6,440	9,211	4,923	1,772
11% NONE	63% LITTLE TO SOME		27% MUCH TO GREAT	

25,238 RESPONSES + 5,319 DON'T KNOWS = 30,557 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 6)

Strong support for this general goal was expressed by all responding groups, especially community respondents, who saw above average progress for this item. The majority of responses fell into the "much to great" value and "little to some" progress categories--a prevalent pattern in this survey. The "don't know" responses of 8% for value and 17% for progress also appeared to be typical for the decentralization goals.

Only a few comments were made about this goal. These often expressed a general weariness with the frequency of all kinds of evaluation. For example:

We are being evaluated to death.

Questions dealing with evaluation need to consider a time limit...programs are evaluated and rejected before sufficient time has elapsed for any change to take place.

Implemented Recommendations

Several specific recommendations have been made and adopted to help schools fit resources to local needs. Among the steps being taken are the addition of curriculum resource teachers, conversion of positions

to get more paraprofessionals, removal of restrictions on the use of department chairmen and assignment of teacher-coordinators, and greater budget flexibility. Decentralization of services has been directed to obtaining cleaner rooms, better repairs and faster service.

Sharp differences between the respondents' assessment of value and their assessment of progress were evident in this section. Values were placed most frequently in the "much to great" category. While progress (especially in budget flexibility and the assigning of curriculum resource teachers) was apparent to many respondents, it was generally placed in the "little to some" range.

CURRICULUM RESOURCE TEACHERS ASSIGNED TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS HAVE HELPED IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMS (ELEMENTARY RESPONSE ONLY) (Survey Item 21)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
9 %	9 %	17 %	24 %	41 %	Percentage
1,604	1,526	2,896	4,008	6,895	Number
9% NONE	26% LITTLE TO SOME		65% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

16,929 RESPONSES + 3,500 DON'T KNOWS = 20,429 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
17 %	21 %	26 %	20 %	17 %	Percentage
2,666	3,203	3,993	3,090	2,576	Number
17% NONE	47% LITTLE TO SOME		37% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

15,528 RESPONSES + 4,842 DON'T KNOWS = 20,370 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 21)

The data show the impact of this recommendation has been felt by all groups. Community groups and administrators were most enthusiastic. The relatively small number of "don't know" and "no" progress responses demonstrate the impact of this recommendation.

Representative comments included a wide range of reactions and concerns related to resource teachers:

> *When curriculum resource teachers are assigned to elementary schools, the teachers function better and the children are happy and learn more. More resource teachers are needed in the arts, humanities, physical education, sciences and music.*

> *Varies with the qualifications of resource teachers. One prototype: abusive, demeaning attitude toward teachers. A good type: solicitous, helpful...responsive attitude.*

One resource teacher doesn't have time to help all the teachers ...has to be full time at one school only.

I feel our school is badly in need of a resource teacher, but we do not have one.

THE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM IS IMPROVED BY CONVERTING TEACHING POSITIONS INTO SALARIES FOR PARAPROFESSIONALS WHO PERFORM SCHOOL-RELATED TASKS (Survey Item 22)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
27 %	13 %	20 %	18 %	21 %	Percentage
6,599	3,240	4,851	4,354	5,160	Number
27% NONE	33% LITTLE TO SOME		39% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

24,204 RESPONSES + 6,353 DON'T KNOWS = 30,757 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
30 %	24 %	26 %	12 %	8 %
5,754	4,695	5,119	2,394	1,532
30% NONE	50% LITTLE TO SOME		20% MUCH TO GREAT	

19,494 RESPONSES + 10,959 DON'T KNOWS = 30,453 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 22)

The value attached to this recommendation by respondents was the lowest in this section and among the lowest on the entire survey. "Little" or "no" value on this item was seen by 40% of the respondents. A third of the teachers saw absolutely no value in this recommendation. Community respondents were generally more receptive to this idea than were other groups. The high "don't know" response, coupled with information provided by the open-ended comments, suggests a need to clarify the exact role of the paraprofessional in the school and to evaluate the importance of the paraprofessional in the educational program without linking financing of the positions to the conversion of teacher positions.

This recommendation elicited an exceptionally large number of open-ended comments. Although many respondents favored the use of paraprofessionals for performing non-teaching tasks, there was some disagreement over the idea of financing paraprofessionals by converting teaching positions. Teachers often expressed support of the idea of being relieved of non-teaching tasks, but also expressed apprehension that unqualified employees might be intruding on teaching responsibilities. Comments included:

Paraprofessionals are vitally important in addition to, not instead of, teaching positions.

Depends on the choice of paraprofessional and teacher ability to work with same.

Our paid aides have been of invaluable service.

In addition to teachers--not in place of teachers.

You don't convert teaching positions for paraprofessionals, you appropriate money to hire teaching aides or paraprofessionals to assist teachers.

RESTRICTIONS MUST BE REMOVED SO THAT DEPARTMENT CHAIRMEN WILL HAVE ADEQUATE TIME TO PERFORM THE SUPPORT FUNCTIONS NECESSARY TO IMPROVE INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAM (SECONDARY RESPONSE ONLY) (Survey Item 23)

	VALUE						PROGRESS				
	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	8 %	8 %	17 %	25 %	42 %		26 %	30 %	26 %	12 %	7 %
Number	883	873	1,925	2,846	4,798		2,516	2,906	2,497	1,145	694
Overview	8% NONE	25% LITTLE TO SOME		67% MUCH TO GREAT			26% NONE	56% LITTLE TO SOME		19% MUCH TO GREAT	

11,325 RESPONSES + 2,838 DON'T KNOWS = 14,163 TOTAL RESPONSES

9,758 RESPONSES + 4,401 DON'T KNOWS = 14,159 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 23)

Although more than two-thirds of the respondents saw "much to great" value in this recommendation, a majority (56%) saw "little" or "no" progress being made in this area.

Open-ended comments frequently revealed concerns about how chairmen are chosen and what their role should be. Representative responses include:

Should be chosen on the basis of experience, ability to organize, seniority.

There should be a district-wide standard as many local schools are ducking any criteria for choosing chairmen.

A department chairman is a key person in the school...the backbone of his department and in turn his leadership affects the entire school.

PRESENT RESTRICTIONS SHOULD BE MODIFIED SO THAT TEACHER-COORDINATORS COULD BE ASSIGNED ON A BASIS OF SPECIFIC NEEDS OF AN INDIVIDUAL SCHOOL (SECONDARY RESPONSE ONLY) (Survey Item 24)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
8 %	8 %	17 %	28 %	39 %	Percentage	26 %	31 %	24 %	12 %	8 %
812	823	1,822	3,060	4,237	Number	2,111	2,504	1,956	946	623
8% NONE	25% LITTLE TO SOME		67% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	26% NONE	55% LITTLE TO SOME		20% MUCH TO GREAT	

10,754 RESPONSES	+	3,088 DON'T KNOWS	=	13,842 TOTAL RESPONSES		8,140 RESPONSES	+	5,748 DON'T KNOWS	=	13,888 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 24)

The assignment of teacher-coordinators on the basis of need at a specific school was assessed as another high value-little progress recommendation. Again, a majority of respondents saw "much to great" value (67%) and "none to little" progress (57%). Administrators gave the greatest value rating of any responding group on this item, but rated progress low. There was virtually no opposition to this recommendation to give secondary schools greater latitude in using coordinatorships to fit local needs.

Because of the wide concurrence by staff and community on this item, there were only a few open-ended comments. The comments were almost identical with those for curriculum resource teachers (Item 21), expressing support for the recommendation as long as teachers were qualified to assume added responsibilities.

DECENTRALIZATION HAS RESULTED IN INCREASED BUDGET FLEXIBILITY AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL (Survey Item 25)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
7 %	7 %	16 %	29 %	41 %	Percentage	13 %	18 %	31 %	25 %	13 %
1,470	1,484	3,683	6,466	9,291	Number	2,617	3,547	5,999	4,878	2,633
7% NONE	23% LITTLE TO SOME		70% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	13% NONE	49% LITTLE TO SOME		38% MUCH TO GREAT	

22,394 RESPONSES + 7,973 DON'T KNOWS = 30,367 TOTAL RESPONSES

19,674 RESPONSES + 10,654 DON'T KNOWS = 30,328 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 25)

This item received the highest progress rating of any item on the survey.

Although the "don't know" response was high, 38% of those who had an opinion saw "much to great" progress being made. The majority of respondents in each of the seven groups was above the "some" progress level.

Comments frequently mentioned budget flexibility as the most tangible evidence of decentralization. Concerns revolved around a desire for still more progress in this direction and the need for additional personnel to handle the added budgetary responsibilities.

> *Some flexibility has occurred but many items...still require a trip through the bureaucratic jungle. Many items still have to go before the Board which are routine in nature.*

> *Budget flexibility has resulted in increased responsibility for office managers. Too many strings attached.*

THE DECENTRALIZATION OF SUPPORTIVE SERVICES (MAINTENANCE, CLERICAL, OPERATIONAL) SHOULD RESULT IN IMPROVED SERVICES TO LOCAL SCHOOLS (Survey Item 26)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
8 %	7 %	15 %	27 %	43 %	Percentage	28 %	27 %	25 %	13 %	7 %
2,061	1,791	3,716	6,770	10,835	Number	5,727	5,614	5,108	2,613	1,481
8% NONE	22% LITTLE TO SOME		70% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	28% NONE	52% LITTLE TO SOME		20% MUCH TO GREAT	
25,173 RESPONSES + 5,290 DON'T KNOWS = 30,463 TOTAL RESPONSES						20,543 RESPONSES + 9,866 DON'T KNOWS = 30,409 TOTAL RESPONSES				

(Survey Item 26)

This item reveals another sharp contrast between value and progress. Although 70% of all respondents saw "much to great" value in this recommendation, 55% saw "little or no" progress. Almost two-thirds (63%) of all teachers evaluated this item in the "little or no" progress range, and 14% reported "much to great" progress.

Open-ended comments, which were primarily from certificated staff, were consistently negative in terms of progress.

No improvement here--only worse.

It would seem to be impossible unless more money is available at the decentralized level.

Steady deterioration--I don't know why.

Unimplemented Recommendations

The last seven items in this section have not been implemented and, therefore, are assessed only in terms of value. While the majority of respondents placed each of these items in the "much to great" value category, an examination of the tables indicates a much higher concurrence on the value of some items than for others.

EACH SCHOOL SHOULD RECEIVE A BUDGET FROM THE STATE FOR DISTRICT OR STATE APPROVED (K-8) TEXTBOOKS TO MEET LOCAL NEEDS (Survey Item 48)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	4 %	4 %	10 %	24 %	57 %
Number	1,133	1,060	2,786	6,562	15,279
Overview	4% NONE	14% LITTLE TO SOME		81% MUCH TO GREAT	

26,820 RESPONSES + 3,552 DON'T KNOWS = 30,372 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 48)

This unimplemented recommendation received the highest value rating of any item on the entire survey with 82% of the respondents in the "much to great" range. More than half (57%) of the responses were in the top category of "great." A breakdown of the overall response illustrates the wide concurrence within staff and community groups. For example, the percentages in the "much to great" category by groups were teacher 84%; administrator, 83%; classified, 72%; advisory council,84%; PTA, 86%; other, 63%.

The desire for increased local input in the selection of textbooks was reaffirmed in the open-ended comments. However, some concern was expressed as to who would actually determine the needs and who would approve the final selections.

Schools should decide what they want.

Extremely important.

Great idea if a board to supervise was set up.

The needs as determined by whom?

EVALUATION OF THE NEEDS OF A SCHOOL SHOULD BE BASED ON SOME OR ALL OF THE FOLLOWING: ENROLLMENT, ABSENCE RATE, NON-PERMANENT TEACHERS, TRANSIENCY RATE, ASSESSED VALUATION (SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING), READING SCORES AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND (Survey Item 51)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	5 %	5 %	14 %	26 %	50 %
Number	1,458	1,463	3,906	7,334	13,953
Overview	5% NONE	19% LITTLE TO SOME		76% MUCH TO GREAT	

28,114 RESPONSES + 2,628 DON'T KNOWS = 30,742 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 51)

This item received a very high value rank--exceeded only by the assessment of the previous item--on the list of unimplemented recommendations. All groups endorsed the concept that no single criterion accurately reflects the diverse and unique needs of each school. The data indicated a belief that resources would be allocated to schools other than those in the inner city on the basis of the suggested criteria. A breakdown by geographic areas shows the percentage of respondents placing "much to great" value on this recommendation:

Area A---73%	Area E---78%	Area I---75%
Area B---80%	Area F---78%	Area J---74%
Area C---72%	Area G---79%	Area K---76%
Area D---74%	Area H---77%	Area L---72%

This consistency of support was also apparent in responses from community and staff groups.

Despite the agreement about the value of this recommendation, there was a large number of open-ended comments. These included suggestions for additional criteria and for omission of some of the criteria proposed in the recommendation. For the most part, comments tended to be brief, positive endorsements of the idea. Examples include:

...top priority.

...should be considered.

...very important.

NORM TABLES (TEACHER-PUPIL RATIO) FOR THE ASSIGNMENT OF TEACHERS SHOULD BE DEVELOPED BASED UPON THE FOLLOWING: ENROLLMENT, ABSENCE RATE, NON-PERMANENT TEACHERS, TRANSIENCY, ASSESSED VALUATION (SINGLE FAMILY DWELLING), READING SCORES AND ETHNIC BACKGROUND (Survey Item 52)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	8 %	6 %	16 %	26 %	46 %
Number	2,028	1,558	4,230	6,881	12,295
Overview	8% NONE	22% LITTLE TO SOME		72% MUCH TO GREAT	

26,992	+	3,799	=	30,791
RESPONSES		DON'T KNOWS		TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 52)

Responses on this item closely paralleled those given to the previous recommendations, with considerable concurrence by areas and individual groups.

Open-ended responses were numerous and similar to those in the previous item. Some concern was expressed about counting teachers who didn't actually teach in the teacher-pupil ratio. For example:

> *In our school there are 18 teachers counted as faculty, but who do not teach.*
>
> *While the board maintains that the class average is 29.5, most social science and English classes have 35-38.*

There was also some concern that the inclusion of ethnicity as a criterion was demeaning and "racist in nature." However, this concern was not reflected in the value response survey. Categorized according to the predominant ethnic group in the respondents' schools, the distribution of responses in the "much to great" category were: Spanish surname, 77%; Black, 76%; Oriental, 71%; and other white, 68%.

ADDITIONAL PERSONNEL, AS DETERMINED BY LOCAL SCHOOL STAFF AND COMMUNITY, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED IN BUDGET ALLOCATIONS FOR LOW NEED (FEWER PROBLEMS AND NEEDS) SCHOOLS (Survey Item 54)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	8 %	8 %	19 %	26 %	39 %
Number	2,113	2,202	5,244	7,032	10,633
Overview	8% NONE	27% LITTLE TO SOME		65% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,224 RESPONSES + 3,521 DON'T KNOWS = 30,745 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 54)

Although the value attributed to this recommendation was slightly lower than the value given to the three preceding items, almost two-thirds of the responses were in the "much to great" group.

A breakdown of the responses to this recommendation showed no correlation between value and such other factors as geographic area, ethnicity or location. Since this recommendation proposes to allocate needed additional personnel to "low-need" schools, one might expect to find less enthusiasm in certain geographic areas or among ethnic minorities which are more likely to be in "high-need" schools. However, the data indicate great consensus regardless of geographic area or ethnicity. Responses in the "much to great" category from the 12 areas were:

Area A---63%	Area E---66%	Area I---68%
Area B---67%	Area F---64%	Area J---67%
Area C---64%	Area G---64%	Area K---64%
Area D---66%	Area H---66%	Area L---66%

Responses in the "much to great" category, according to the predominant ethnic group in the respondent's school, were Spanish surname, 63%; Oriental, 65%; Black, 67%; and other white, 67%.

Open-ended comments can be divided into two groups: those expressing approval and those proposing that this recommendation be deferred for higher priority items. For example:

...would be of great value.

...not until high need schools become low need schools.

TEACHER-COORDINATORS (TEACHERS WHO RECEIVE EXTRA SALARY FOR ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES) SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS ON AN ENROLLMENT BASIS (ELEMENTARY RESPONSE ONLY) (Survey Item 55)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3 MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	16 %	11 %	19 %	24 %	32 %
Number	2,548	1,756	3,038	3,855	5,214
Overview	16% NONE	30% LITTLE TO SOME		56% MUCH TO GREAT	

16,411 RESPONSES + 3,958 DON'T KNOWS = 20,369 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 55)

Although more than half (56%) of the respondents placed a "much to great" value on this recommendation, it was among the unimplemented recommendations receiving the least affirmed ratings. The "no" value response of 16% is significant, particularly since this was an "elementary response only" item. Administrators, who have reported a heavy increase in their workload and a marked change in their responsibilities in recent years, placed a higher value (72% in the "much to great" category) on this recommendation. Other groups were distributed as follows in the "much to great" category: teachers, 54%; classified, 55%; advisory council members, 63%; PTA, 59%; and "others," 43%. The "don't know" response of 19% was the highest in this section for unimplemented recommendations.

The comments were generally supportive of this recommendation and frequently suggested need rather than enrollment as the criterion for assignment.

Yes on this--but don't want it on enrollment basis.

Coordinators should be teachers assigned to the school, i.e., one of the regular teachers in that school.

Should be based on need not environment.

Teacher coordinators would not only provide incentive, but would also give recognition for services rendered.

ADDITIONAL TEACHER-COORDINATOR POSITIONS SHOULD BE ASSIGNED TO SECONDARY SCHOOLS ON AN ENROLLMENT BASIS (SECONDARY RESPONSE ONLY) (Survey Item 56)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	16 %	10 %	19%	22 %	32 %
Number	1,928	1,212	2,290	2,688	3,895
Overview	16% NONE	29% LITTLE TO SOME		54% MUCH TO GREAT	

12,013 RESPONSES + 2,966 DON'T KNOWS = 14,979 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 56)

Responses to this "secondary only" item closely paralleled responses to the preceding "elementary only" recommendation. Interestingly, secondary administrators and secondary teachers placed exactly the same "much to great" values as did their elementary colleagues on the preceding item (72% and 54%, respectively). The "no" value response was also identical (16%).

As in the comments on the preceding recommendation, respondents questioned the criterion of enrollment as the basis for assigning coordinatorships.

THE BOARD OF EDUCATION SHOULD CREATE EXPERIMENTAL COMPLEXES AND DEOMONSTRATION SCHOOLS (Survey Item 61)

VALUE

	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	16 %	11 %	20 %	18 %	35 %
Number	4,428	3,060	5,342	5,046	9,422
Overview	16% NONE	31% LITTLE TO SOME		53% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,298 RESPONSES + 3,568 DON'T KNOWS = 30,866 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 61)

While 53% of the respondents were in the "much to great" value range, the distribution of responses suggests a wide divergence of opinion on the value of this recommendation. Respondents from predominantly Black schools supported this recommendation with greater enthusiasm (65% were in the "much to great" value column and only 11% in the "no" value area). Administrators were the most supportive group, with 63% in the "much to great" category and only 10% in the "no" value column. Teachers' responses were identical with those in the table above.

Open-ended comments revealed a wide range of opinion.

Experimental schools should not be necessary.

No, not until the schools achieve quality education in the 3 R's.

Experimental complex, yes. Demonstration schools, no!

A must for progress.

Additional Comments

Local school flexibility, though not endorsed by all respondents, received considerable support in the open-ended comments. Many saw evidence of progress; others suggested caution. A sample of these comments expresses the range of opinion related to this section:

Need decentralization of supportive services (maintenance, clerical, operational) should result in improved services to local schools.

Decentralization is not a paper change. We have far too many classified services that could be handled better by having a fund located in the individual school.

Future textbooks and school programs should have a better reflection of ethnic values and representation.

High interest programs based on ethnic and community needs are a must.

The entire concept of decentralization is not worth the cost. It is merely succumbing to the demands of militant minorities. The only real benefit has been some budgetary autonomy to principals.

"High need" schools are not the only ones which need consideration. Each school has its own individual problems. My school would be considered a "low need" school; however, because of tremendous overcrowding we are now showing problem areas (arson, hazing, low morale for both student and teacher). Are we to be forgotten

and generally sacrificed because our problems are not horrendous? Must our students burn buildings and attack teachers before they are noticed?

If each school is to have different reading programs, how can there be any continuity for a child who moves from one school to another?

With the high mobility rate, children moving from district to district may be handicapped by differences in educational priorities at various school locations.

Decentralization must be coupled with local board and local elections to be effective. No other alternate plan will work.

I particularly like the increased budget flexibility at the local school level as a result of the decentralization process. We have been able to use our increased funds more "wisely and well" in the areas of our greatest needs as determined by our entire staff.

Local purchasing of supplies has improved the classroom teaching situation fantastically!!

It is encouraging that more funds are being dispensed at the school level rather than being mandated for specific programs without internal feedback.

I feel the monies allocated have been more flexible and better spent in order to meet the needs of individual schools.

Our school faculty has enjoyed having a say in what books they would like reordered or purchased new for the library which was and is possible through decentralization.

Inner-city schools need their <u>own</u> textbooks and programs related to their environment and background.

Perhaps a handyman at each school doing the small painting, carpentry, asphalt, equipment repair jobs or perhaps share the handymen in each area.

As a "long time" teacher, the last 2 years have meant more to me than all the preceding years. We have been allowed to experiment with the individual needs of our school in mind. Our reading has witnessed a great step forward in ability, over-all interest, motivation and general improvement.

There has been much improvement in all areas. Teachers are more involved, as are communities. Teachers and other staff are learning to take responsibility for materials, curriculum, planning.

Teachers and students have not for the most part been affected by decentralization due to budget restrictions, and communication and administrative procedures at the local school preventing a staff voice in educational decisions.

The organized attempts at "decentralization" have seemed to me a terrible waste of time and personnel.

General Observations

The concept of local school flexibility as an outgrowth of decentralization was strongly supported by staff and community. The values of the previously adopted goals and recommendations for encouraging greater local school flexibility were reaffirmed--with the exception of "converting teaching positions into salaries for paraprofessionals."

The use of criteria in addition to enrollment (such as the absence rate, transiency, reading scores, non-permanent teachers) for determining school needs was widely endorsed by all groups in all areas.

There was evidence of a spirit of unselfishness among staff and community in assessing district needs. Ethnicity, geographic area, school level and other identifiable variables seemed to have little correlation with attitudes toward individual recommendations.

Certificated staff saw only "little" progress in improved supportive services (maintenance, clerical, operational) to schools as a result of decentralization.

Staff saw the assignment of elementary curriculum resource teachers and increased budget flexibility among the most highly valued recommendations in terms of progress.

Responses showed a desire to obtain additional state funding for the purchase of approved textbooks on the basis of locally determined needs.

SECTION III

COMMUNICATIONS

Previous studies have shown there is a close relationship between the improvement of communication and success in implementing decentralization. Without the mutual understanding that effective communications can produce between staff and community, it is difficult to generate support for any district program. This is especially true of the decentralization effort.

Decentralization...One Year Later indicated specific needs in the area of communication. They were:

--Defining and strengthening communications lines.

--Encouraging staff development programs--particularly on the local community level.

--Increasing emphasis on the "input" aspect of the communication system.

--Developing and disseminating more information about the operation of the district to staff and community.

In attempting to improve communications, it is important to find out how much value and progress staff and community see in this goal and the recommendations which have been implemented to achieve it.

The open-ended responses generated by the second-year study included a variety of comments, suggestions, complaints and observations about the communication system. There were positive suggestions for improvement, mild and strong criticisms, and even a number of commendatory comments. Together with the statistical data on the survey response sheets, these responses can serve as a broad and sound base for planning improvements in communications.

IMPROVE COMMUNICATION WITHIN THE SCHOOL SYSTEM AND WITH THOSE IT SERVES (Survey Item 9)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	6 %	12 %	24 %	53 %	Percentage
1,326	1,784	3,626	7,123	15,518	Number
5% NONE	18% LITTLE TO SOME		77% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

29,377 RESPONSES + 1,492 DON'T KNOWS = 30,869 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
17 %	27 %	32 %	16 %	9 %
4,568	7,376	8,622	4,234	2,488
17% NONE	59% LITTLE TO SOME		25% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,288 RESPONSES + 3,560 DON'T KNOWS = 30,848 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 9)

This item received the highest value rating, as well as the highest numerical response, of any of the nine general decentralization goals in the survey. More than half of all respondents (53%) placed it in the "great" value column. The majority of respondents (57%) saw at least "some" progress, and one-fourth of the respondents saw "much to great" progress being made.

All responding groups were in accord on the value of this goal. There were sharper contrasts in the assessment of progress, with community seeing considerably more evidence of progress than staff. For example, in the "much to great" progress category, the distribution of respondents was teachers, 18%; administrators, 25%; PTA members, 36%; and advisory council members, 38%.

While some respondents saw evidence of better communications, the majority of those offering comments on the open-ended section felt there were a number of inadequacies in communication. Comments included:

> *There seems to be more coordination and communication among the grade levels.*
>
> *Improved communication will be the result of increased TIME allocated to communications.*
>
> *...we know less about who to contact about everything than we did 20 years ago.*
>
> *Communication is poor. Teachers are locked in their classrooms completely removed from other facets of school operations.*

There is no communication within the...system--no one knows anything. Try to get an answer to a problem--area says downtown--450 North Grand says try area--... Decentralization just isn't working.

It seems there is very little communication...I wonder if there is any truth in the saying, "United we stand, divided we fall?"

Implemented Recommendations

POLICY AND PROCEDURAL BULLETINS RELATING TO KINDERGARTEN THROUGH TWELFTH GRADE STRUCTURE SHOULD BE UPDATED AND BROUGHT TOGETHER FOR EASY REFERENCE (Survey Item 42)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	6 %	15 %	26 %	48 %	Percentage
1,295	1,728	4,077	7,111	13,042	Number
5% NONE	21% LITTLE TO SOME		74% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

27,253 RESPONSES + 3,530 DON'T KNOWS = 30,783 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
25 %	29 %	25 %	12 %	9 %	Percentage
4,690	5,322	4,525	2,224	1,698	Number
25% NONE	54% LITTLE TO SOME		21% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

18,459 RESPONSES + 12,082 DON'T KNOWS = 30,541 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 42)

Although the value of this recommendation was not questioned by any group, respondents--especially certificated staff--saw little evidence of progress. A majority of administrators (58%) and teachers (61%) evaluated the progress as "little" or "none."

Comments reflected the need for implementing this recommendation further, particularly since the elementary-secondary pattern has been changed to a K-12 structure. Among the comments were:

This would be a definite step in the right direction.

...are they all necessary with decentralization?

We are still operating on some policies contained in 1965 division bulletins.

Future shock continues to hurt.

THE DISTRICT SHOULD DESIGN AN OUTLINE (PROFILE) FOR EACH SCHOOL TO USE IN IDENTIFYING THE STRENGTHS AND NEEDS OF THE SCHOOL AND THE COMMUNITY (Survey Item 43)

VALUE						PROGRESS					
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
11 %	9 %	19 %	25 %	36 %	Percentage	34 %	26 %	22 %	11 %	8 %	
3,152	2,496	5,181	6,739	9,911	Number	6,012	4,563	3,827	1,922	1,431	
11% NONE	28% LITTLE TO SOME		61% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	34% NONE	48% LITTLE TO SOME		19% MUCH TO GREAT		

27,479 RESPONSES + 3,364 DON'T KNOWS = 30,843 TOTAL RESPONSES

17,755 RESPONSES + 12,725 DON'T KNOWS = 30,480 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 43)

This recommendation, which was based on a need to match school needs with available resources more effectively, was given a comparatively low value and progress assessment. Certificated staff felt there was "little or no" progress, with 65% of the administrators and 61% of the teachers placing progress in this category.

Open-ended comments revealed considerable misunderstanding of this recommendation. (The intent of the recommendation was that the district design the form for the profile but not gather the information.) Comments showed that many certificated respondents feared that responsibility for collecting this information might be assigned to the local school without allocating resources to carry it out. Sample comments follow:

Who will evaluate and design profile...value judgments?... Snooping?

Why should the district do this when the local school should be the one in a decentralized situation?

More needless paperwork for downtown administrators.

...District is not in a position to know the needs of each school. The school knows its needs...

...idea is great, but the community is concerned about who would make the profile.

...great value, but the profile should include someone who is aware of the...school and community...

THE PUBLICATION OF "LOS ANGELES SCHOOL OBSERVER" PROVIDES CURRENT INFORMATION ABOUT THE DISTRICT HELPFUL TO ADVISORY COUNCILS
(Survey Item 44)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
11 %	13 %	25 %	25 %	25 %	Percentage	18 %	23 %	30 %	19 %	10 %
2,047	2,361	4,560	4,437	4,499	Number	2,532	3,376	4,341	2,773	1,443
11% NONE	38% LITTLE TO SOME		50% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	18% NONE	53% LITTLE TO SOME		29% MUCH TO GREAT	

17,904 RESPONSES + 12,828 DON'T KNOWS = 30,732 TOTAL RESPONSES

14,465 RESPONSES + 16,037 DON'T KNOWS = 30,502 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 44)

The total percentage of "don't know" responses (42% for value; 53% for progress) is the most significant factor in analyzing this item.

At the time most people were surveyed, there had been just one issue of this publication and it was distributed only to advisory council members. As a result, teachers had a large "don't know" response for value (44%) and for progress (56%). Perhaps only the advisory council members' responses should have been considered for this item since the distribution of the publication was limited to them. Their reaction was considerably more favorable than the overall figures:

	None	Little to Some	Much to Great
VALUE	6%	30%	64%
PROGRESS	12%	46%	42%

The percentage of advisory council "don't know" responses (value--18%; progress--25%) was less than half as large as the percentage of other respondents.

Open-ended comments ranged from those which were laudatory to those which were highly critical. They included:

...should be available to all school personnel.

...should be provided for any parent interested...

The School Observer has been a morale booster.

The general community could benefit from the L.A. School Observer and hopefully will bring out more active participation from the community at large.

The "School Observer" publication is a great help--keep it up. Advisory groups need to know what other groups are doing.

Publications are nice but usually not worth the cost.

...waste of educational dollar.

Have never seen this document.

...slanted to board's views.

Does not impress grass roots citizen.

BASIC KNOWLEDGE AND CURRENT INFORMATION ABOUT THE OPERATION OF THE DISTRICT MUST BE PROVIDED TO ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBERS AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL (Survey Item 45)

VALUE						PROGRESS					
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	8 %	19 %	29 %	38 %	Percentage	17 %	27 %	31 %	16 %	8 %	
1,484	2,063	5,182	7,992	10,459	Number	3,044	4,918	5,662	2,935	1,513	
5% NONE	27% LITTLE TO SOME		67% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	17% NONE	58% LITTLE TO SOME		24% MUCH TO GREAT		
27,180 RESPONSES	+ 3,657 DON'T KNOWS	= 30,837 TOTAL RESPONSES				18,072 RESPONSES	+ 12,537 DON'T KNOWS	= 30,609 TOTAL RESPONSES			

(Survey Item 45)

The importance of making information easily accessible to advisory councils is evidenced by the 68% "much to great" overall value rating by respondents. It is more strongly reaffirmed by the advisory council response of 82% in the "much to great" column. Although the overall "don't know" response of 41% is comparatively high, the incidence of "don't know" responses is considerably lower among advisory council members (17%).

A more reliable indicator of progress might be that of the advisory council responses which were distributed as follows: "none," 14%; "little to some," 59%; "much to great," 28%.

Representative comments included:

Our individual advisory council has received essentially no information about the manner in which the district operates, arrives at its methods, distributes its resources, or establishes its priorities.

The '73 Handbook is well-written and concise, but must have broader distribution to participants on the council (staff and community).

Information about the operation of the district should be provided to all parents of public school children. If the community knew more about the district, maybe they would be more concerned.

That is ideal if the means are available.

THE DISTRICT'S COMMUNICATION SYSTEM SHOULD BE RESTRUCTURED TO PROVIDE EFFECTIVE TWO-WAY COMMUNICATION BETWEEN EMPLOYEES AND THOSE SERVED BY LOCAL SCHOOLS (Survey Item 46)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
3 %	5 %	15 %	27 %	50 %	Percentage	23 %	31 %	26 %	11 %	8 %
909	1,380	4,091	7,244	13,648	Number	4,721	6,338	5,253	2,299	1,663
3% NONE	20% LITTLE TO SOME		77% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	23% NONE	57% LITTLE TO SOME		19% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,272 RESPONSES + 3,587 DON'T KNOWS = 30,859 TOTAL RESPONSES

20,274 RESPONSES + 10,292 DON'T KNOWS = 30,566 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 46)

Although the value rating given to this recommendation (77%,"much to great") was underscored by each responding group, it received relatively low progress scores. The high "don't know" progress responses (34% of the total), coupled with the fact that nearly a quarter of those who did respond evaluated progress as "none," indicate a need for special efforts in restructuring the district's communications system.

Comments emphasized the need to localize the communications structure, giving special attention to the "two-way" aspect of the recommendation. Among the comments were:

Everything we are doing is too complicated and involves too many people.

Communication is available if people choose to avail themselves.

...don't see two-way communication beyond area level.

...should be restructured to provide effective two-way communication...at the local school level.

I feel this is being well done at the local and district level. We could use further staff development.

COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES SHOULD BE AVAILABLE IN THE FIELD SERVICE CENTERS AND LOCAL COMPLEXES OR CLUSTERS (Survey Item 47)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	6 %	17 %	28 %	45 %	Percentage
1,139	1,482	4,156	7,035	11,143	Number
5% NONE	23% LITTLE TO SOME		73% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

24,955 RESPONSES + 5,798 DON'T KNOWS = 30,753 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
21 %	30 %	28 %	13 %	9 %	Percentage
3,538	5,067	4,863	2,240	1,464	Number
21% NONE	58% LITTLE TO SOME		22% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

17,172 RESPONSES + 13,276 DON'T KNOWS = 30,448 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 47)

This recommendation was closely related to the preceding item, both in purpose and response. Although teachers saw the least progress of any group, 73% of the respondents felt the recommendation had "much to great" value.

Comments were similar to those in the preceding item.

...would be effective if experts are hired to implement and train those involved.

What are communication services?

We need cable TV or something better than rabbit ears.

What are "communicating services"--what are field service centers? If these questions were in lay English a better response could be made.

Communications services should be available in the schools.

Additional Comments

Perhaps the clearest indication of weakness in the communications system was revealed by the extensive use of the open-ended response sheets. There is apparently a need for staff and school community to have a way to suggest, react, criticize and be heard in a convenient and informal way.

Respondents frequently expressed skepticism that their comments would be read. Perhaps this is an indication of a need to build staff and community confidence in a two-way communications system. Comments included:

Don't think teachers are made aware of progress being made.

No one knows who to address certain questions to any longer. I have been transferred up to eight times on one question.

The information I find I am lacking as a result of filling out this questionnaire leads to the conclusion that: dissemination of information concerning decentralization is very poor. I read the L.A. Times, Spotlight and any bulletins that happen to come my way.

When calling downtown, one becomes an employee number to be switched from extension to extension. Much more business should be handled in the area offices where a teacher can feel like a person working with other people.

More personal attention, please! Help!

It would be nice to be able to call an office and ask a question and not be totally frustrated after an hour on the phone.

We need more direct communication with the policy makers.

It seems that there is very little communication within the district...

General Observations

The predominance of "much to great" value and "little to some" progress assessments continued as the pattern for this section. However, respondents placed higher value and lower progress ratings on the communications recommendations than on recommendations listed in other sections of this report.

Although they endorse the value of recommendations, those closest to the learning site (teachers and administrators) most often saw the least progress in the implementation of these recommendations.

Evidence suggests that community groups felt they were getting more information about the operation of the district than they were receiving a year ago.

There was evidence of a lack of confidence by employees in the effectiveness of the upward aspect of the communications system.

Respondents had a small "don't know" response to the value of the recommendations (with the exception of "School Observer") but expressed a high "don't know" response when assessing the progress of implementing recommendations.

Although respondents felt there is a distinct need for improving communications services, they saw some progress being made in correcting deficiencies which were apparent a year ago.

SECTION IV

COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Before the decentralization process began, the district depended almost entirely on school support groups for school organized community involvement in educational decision-making. Among these groups, which were formed primarily to help the local school were PTA, parents' clubs, booster clubs and alumni associations. In addition, many schools had organized a school-community advisory group even though board action did not require such councils until December, 1971.

The desire to involve a wider segment of the community more directly in educational planning and the decision-making process led to the 1971 board action mandating school-community advisory councils in every school (Board Rule 1370). Guidelines were adopted for the existing and newly formed councils. These guidelines described the structure, function and operation of advisory councils. The minimum functions to be performed by advisory councils were outlined in eight statements which were included in the 1971 board guidelines (revised in 1972).

The school-community advisory council handbook, revised in 1973, explicitly defined "advising" in terms of advisory council functions. The handbook explained that "advising" was intended to mean: (1) inquiring; (2) informing; (3) suggesting; (4) recommending; and (5) evaluating.

General Goals

MAINTAIN AN OPEN STRUCTURE TO FACILITATE THE INVOLVEMENT OF PARENTS, LOCAL RESIDENTS, PUPILS, TEACHERS AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS (Survey Item 4)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
4 %	8 %	20 %	28 %	40 %	Percentage	8 %	23 %	36 %	22 %	11 %
1,047	2,452	5,809	8,248	11,461	Number	2,224	6,269	9,801	6,127	2,942
4% NONE	28% LITTLE TO SOME		68% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	8% NONE	59% LITTLE TO SOME		33% MUCH TO GREAT	

29,017 RESPONSES + 1,598 DON'T KNOWS = 30,615 TOTAL RESPONSES

27,363 RESPONSES + 3,243 DON'T KNOWS = 30,606 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 4)

More than two-thirds of the respondents saw "much to great" value in this goal. At the same time, this item received the highest progress rating of any of the nine general goals of decentralization. Council members saw even greater value (84%,"much to great") and progress (43%,"much to great") than other respondents. The small "don't know" responses for all groups were also significant.

Community and staff comments were mixed as shown by the following examples:

> *Open structure actually works to increase community input--at the expense of teachers' input. Open structure should include BOTH equally.*
>
> *Open structure seems to lead to less effective action on the part of pupils and teachers alike.*
>
> *Too much involvement of parents and local residents in something they know nothing about--takes up too much time--no additional help.*
>
> *While I believe the goal is important, it should not distract principals or teachers too much or take too much of their time away from classroom planning and observing or the formation of educational goals.*

Implemented Recommendations

ADVISORY COUNCILS OPERATE MORE DEMOCRATICALLY BECAUSE OF REVISED GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS (BOARD RULE 1370) (Survey Item 27)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
12 %	12 %	22 %	27 %	27 %	Percentage	23 %	23 %	28 %	17 %	9 %
2,127	2,191	4,076	4,870	4,989	Number	3,483	3,606	4,333	2,675	1,318
12% NONE	34% LITTLE TO SOME				Overview	23% NONE			26% MUCH TO GREAT	
			54% MUCH TO GREAT				51% LITTLE TO SOME			

18,253 RESPONSES + 12,198 DON'T KNOWS = 30,451 TOTAL RESPONSES

15,415 RESPONSES + 15,032 DON'T KNOWS = 30,447 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 27)

After mandated advisory councils became operational under Board Rule 1370, the need to clarify certain operational procedures and functions

became apparent. This recommendation (Survey Item 27) was implemented in an effort to meet this need. However, many survey respondents indicated that they had neither seen nor heard of the revised Board Rule 1370. Although more than half of those responding to this item were in the "much to great" value group, the overall value was not nearly as high as that assigned by those more familiar with the recommendation. For example, advisory council responses on value were distributed as follows: "none," 9%; "little to some," 25%; "much to great," 65%. Administrators, who were also lower in "don't know" value responses (9%), were also significantly higher in value responses.

Reservations expressed in the open-ended comments most often related to the restrictiveness of the revised guidelines. For instance:

> *Board Rule 1370 is too inflexible. ...rules are contrary to the democratic process. I feel that the SCAC is operating with hands tied.*
>
> *If the SCAC's are to operate more democratically, then they should not be dictated to concerning the method of holding elections.*
>
> *We felt the revised handbook sets down some rules which are contrary to democratic process.*

THE REVISED 1973 SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCIL HANDBOOK, WHICH IS AN ATTEMPT TO CONDENSE AND CLARIFY DEMOCRATIC PROCEDURES FOR ADVISORY COUNCILS, IS AN IMPORTANT INFORMATION SOURCE FOR COUNCIL MEMBERS (Survey Item 28)

VALUE						PROGRESS					
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
10 %	11 %	22 %	28 %	30 %	Percentage	19 %	21 %	29 %	20 %	11 %	
1,623	1,759	3,553	4,533	4,922	Number	2,455	2,767	3,804	2,604	1,458	
10% NONE	33% LITTLE TO SOME		58% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	19% NONE	50% LITTLE TO SOME		31% MUCH TO GREAT		

16,390 RESPONSES + 14,097 DON'T KNOWS = 30,487 TOTAL RESPONSES

13,088 RESPONSES + 17,278 DON'T KNOWS = 30,366 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 28)

As in the preceding item, it is improbable that a large segment of any group other than council members felt qualified to respond. The "don't know" response to this item is the highest on the entire survey in both

value (46%) and progress (59%). The revised handbook, which was aimed at being explicit, as well as brief, was given a higher value rating by those groups most likely to have seen it. For example, 65% of the administrators and council members were in the "much to great" value category.

Respondents frequently stated they had never seen the handbook. This was understandable, except when the respondent identified himself as a council member. Other criticisms included:

> *The SCAC handbooks finally became available in May 1973, six weeks before the school year ends, but on a "sign-out" basis. Copies should be available to all council members.*
>
> *Our council, during meetings, has never referred to the handbook. It is a good idea poorly expressed in confusing "educationese."*

THE DISTRICT SHOULD PROVIDE ASSISTANCE WHEN ADVISORY COUNCILS MEASURE THEIR OPERATIONS AND EFFECTIVENESS (Survey Item 29)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
9 %	10 %	24 %	28 %	31 %	Percentage
2,090	2,340	5,732	6,684	7,409	Number
9% NONE	34% LITTLE TO SOME		59% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

24,255 RESPONSES + 6,409 DON'T KNOWS = 30,664 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
22 %	26 %	30 %	14 %	8 %	Percentage
3,580	4,163	4,747	2,190	1,254	Number
22% NONE	56% LITTLE TO SOME		22% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

15,934 RESPONSES + 14,509 DON'T KNOWS = 30,503 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 29)

The need for regular evaluations of council effectiveness has been recognized as a basic one. Councils have been encouraged to devise ways to assess their own effectiveness, and the board has provided considerable assistance in this area. In An Evaluation: School-Community Advisory Councils (1972), which was based on data collected in almost 1,400 "long-form" questionnaires from council members and an additional 1,100 "short-form" surveys from the community, councils were evaluated in terms of (1) organization and operating procedures and (2) functional effectiveness. Council effectiveness was evaluated again on a district-wide basis in the 1973 survey which provided the data for this report.

These data showed there was little variation in either value or progress as seen by individual groups. However, council respondents assigned

slightly higher scores, perhaps because council members felt more competent to evaluate this recommendation (7%, "don't know" value; 30%, "don't know" progress).

There were only a few comments related to this item expressing concern over the validity of a district-developed instrument for measuring council effectiveness.

DISTRICT SUPPORT TO LOCAL COUNCILS IS NECESSARY TO INCREASE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION (Survey Item 30)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
10 %	9 %	20 %	27 %	34 %	Percentage
2,438	2,340	5,127	6,827	8,512	Number
10% NONE	29% LITTLE TO SOME		61% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

25,244 RESPONSES + 5,477 DON'T KNOWS = 30,721 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
21 %	27 %	29 %	14 %	9 %	Percentage
3,835	4,938	5,155	2,610	1,515	Number
21% NONE	56% LITTLE TO SOME		23% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

18,053 RESPONSES + 12,517 DON'T KNOWS = 30,570 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 30)

The open-ended comments on the 1972 Advisory Council Survey revealed that all groups regarded apathy as the most serious problem confronting advisory councils. In response to this finding, the district attempted to gain broader community support for advisory councils by developing additional publications and communications, revising operating procedures, attempting to identify those factors which seemed to help councils achieve effectiveness, and disseminating information about these "success" factors to councils.

Although council members saw greater value in this recommendation than any other group (70%, "much to great"), they saw no more evidence of progress than did other groups: "none," 25%; "little to some," 52%; "much to great," 23%. Administrators' and teachers' opinions corresponded closely to the overall value and progress responses.

Open-ended responses most frequently expressed concern over the use of the word "support" in the recommendation. Respondents questioned whether the support was monetary, which they felt might be better spent in the classroom, or whether it was leadership support in

terms of Rockefeller funds,* staff development and in-service training. Sample comments include:

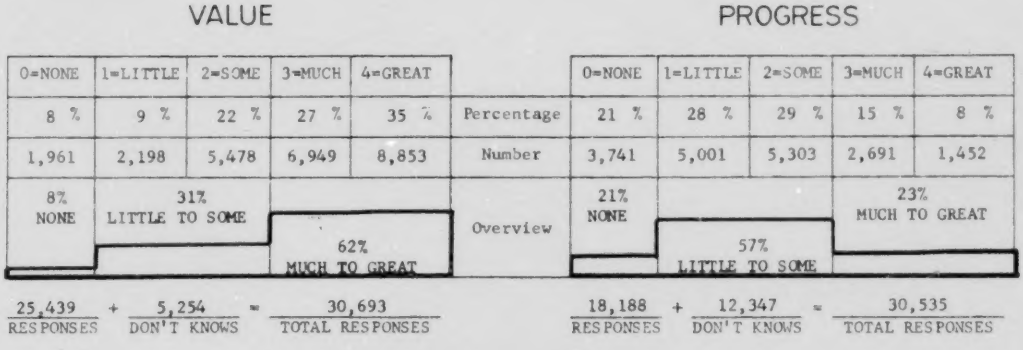
I do not see a need to increase community participation if parents don't feel a need to. If they are happy with their school, it will only distract teachers and the principals. Parents, too, usually have busy schedules which make such meetings difficult if pushed too hard.

I question whether the district is sufficiently objective to provide assistance in measuring operations and effectiveness of advisory councils. This advice should be provided by impartial experts in such relations.

The district should continue the financial support to SCAC's as provided currently through Rockefeller funds, if no outside source of funding is available.

What kind of support? Community participation should be based on interest not power or personal gain.

STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION MUST BE PROVIDED FOR SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS (Survey Item 31)



(Survey Item 31)

Previous surveys concerning this question indicated the local school principal is the most important key to the success or failure of the advisory council. The 1973 survey reaffirmed the value of staff development for administrators. While this item received a "much to great" value rating of 62%, administrators were the most enthusiastic. Value responses from this group were "none," 4%; "little to some," 24%; "much to great," 73%. In terms of progress, administrators clustered in the

* The school district has received a three-year grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to aid in the training of council members.

"little to some" category (78%). Community (PTA and council members) saw slightly more progress than indicated in the overall response chart.

Open-ended responses showed the only opposition to staff development for administrators centered around the concern of whether the administrators had time to participate in this kind of program. Examples follow:

> *Administrators need more time in their schools.*
>
> *A teacher's role is well defined: he must work with, guide, and help children in the classroom. A principal may choose his role--he may feel his job is to reinforce the teacher's role or he may decide he should function as a public relations contact....He sets no guide for his staff and he never makes decisions....Communication breaks down and the school flounders. Is it the school's job to follow the dictates of the untrained public? No other profession permits this.*
>
> *How could this be implemented with present administrative staff as assigned? They are overloaded at the present time with additional parental involvement value--good. Development should be initiated and provided by area administrators not local school.*

There were also some comments stating that training should be commensurate with need, rather than proceeding on the assumption that all principals were equally skilled (or unskilled) in developing community participation.

A TRAINING PROGRAM IN EFFECTIVE COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION SHOULD BE PROVIDED FOR SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS (Survey Item 32)

VALUE						PROGRESS				
0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT		0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
9 %	8 %	18 %	25 %	39 %	Percentage	29 %	28 %	23 %	11 %	8 %
2,385	2,299	4,989	6,849	10,769	Number	5,534	5,238	4,293	2,158	1,561
9% NONE	26% LITTLE TO SOME		64% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview	29% NONE	51% LITTLE TO SOME		19% MUCH TO GREAT	

27,291 RESPONSES + 3,448 DON'T KNOWS = 30,739 TOTAL RESPONSES

18,784 RESPONSES + 11,769 DON'T KNOWS = 30,553 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 32)

The value-progress discrepancy gap is unusually large for this recommendation. This contrasts considerably with the survey responses of a year

ago in which principals named in-service training for members as the recommendation most essential to advisory council effectiveness. Although council respondents this year were more convinced of the value of training (70%,"much to great") than were other respondents, they saw no more progress ("none," 34%; "little to some," 43%; "much to great," 24%). Certificated staff followed the pattern of other responding groups, seeing "much to great" value but "little" progress. The high overall "don't know" progress response is also significant although 80% of all council respondents felt able to evaluate progress.

A wide range of opinion was expressed concerning this recommendation. A sample of the comments shows this diversity:

> *The councils definitely could use a professional speaker for advice and help at least once or twice a year--free of charge.*
>
> *I feel that the advisory council should not make decisions pertaining to the educational goals, needs, assessments, etc. They tend to define educational goals in terms of their own children.*
>
> *These are not the ones who need the in-service training.*
>
> *Should training of advisory councils be necessary? Shouldn't they be the spontaneous reaction of the neighborhood and school community?*
>
> *A training program is essential to help the community evaluate its selections of priorities.*

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR ASSESSING EDUCATIONAL NEEDS (Survey Item 33)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
12 %	12 %	25 %	23 %	28 %	Percentage
3,406	3,410	7,162	6,664	7,898	Number
12% NONE	37% LITTLE TO SOME				Overview
			51% MUCH TO GREAT		

28,540 RESPONSES + 2,275 DON'T KNOWS = 30,815 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
20 %	27 %	32 %	14 %	7 %
4,321	6,015	7,024	3,026	1,616
20% NONE			21% MUCH TO GREAT	
	59% LITTLE TO SOME			

22,002 RESPONSES + 8,418 DON'T KNOWS = 30,420 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 33)

This recommendation, as well as the next five, received extreme variations in value rating among the responding groups. Teachers saw the least value (45%, "much to great"), council members saw the most (81%, "much to great"), and administrators were somewhere between (60%, "much to great"). Progress was correlated with value inasmuch as the groups that indicated lower value also indicated lower progress.

This council function was evaluated a year ago by council members. Respondents at that time felt more involved and effective in assessing educational needs than they did in any other function enumerated in Board Rule 1370. In the 1973 survey, two-thirds of all council respondents evaluated their progress in this area as at least "some," and only 11% evaluated their progress as "none."

Open-ended comments were most frequently submitted by those who had concerns about non-educators making educational decisions at the local level.

How to run the schools should be left to the professionals.

When my doctor goes to the community to seek advice...on treating my illnesses, I'll worry too.

Parents are used extensively as volunteers but are expected to be silent observers and have no place in establishing educational priorities or defining educational goals.

The ordinary parent is not trained for such tasks, usually. They should rather give criticism of current programs or make suggestions for better programs.

Are parents really qualified in this area to assess educational needs?

Participation is necessary, but with in-service.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR ESTABLISHING EDUCATIONAL PRIORITIES (Survey Item 34)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
14 %	14 %	26 %	22 %	25 %	Percentage
3,890	4,019	7,460	6,230	7,028	Number
14% NONE	40% LITTLE TO SOME		47% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,627 RESPONSES + 2,255 DON'T KNOWS = 30,882 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
20 %	28 %	31 %	14 %	7 %
4,402	6,053	6,899	3,023	1,608
20% NONE	59% LITTLE TO SOME		21% MUCH TO GREAT	

21,985 RESPONSES + 8,557 DON'T KNOWS = 30,542 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 34)

This recommendation is so closely related to the previous item, both in purpose and response, that an analysis of the responses is unnecessary. However, it should be noted that teachers gave it the lowest value and progress ratings, and council members gave it the highest.

Respondents' comments were few and duplicated those given to the previous item.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR PLANNING THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (Survey Item 35)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
21 %	18 %	26 %	16 %	19 %	Percentage
5,997	5,087	7,421	4,607	5,488	Number
21% NONE	44% LITTLE TO SOME		35% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,600 RESPONSES + 2,274 DON'T KNOWS = 30,874 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
28 %	28 %	27 %	11 %	6 %
5,947	6,045	5,797	2,322	1,360
28% NONE	55% LITTLE TO SOME		17% MUCH TO GREAT	

21,471 RESPONSES + 8,993 DON'T KNOWS = 30,464 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 35)

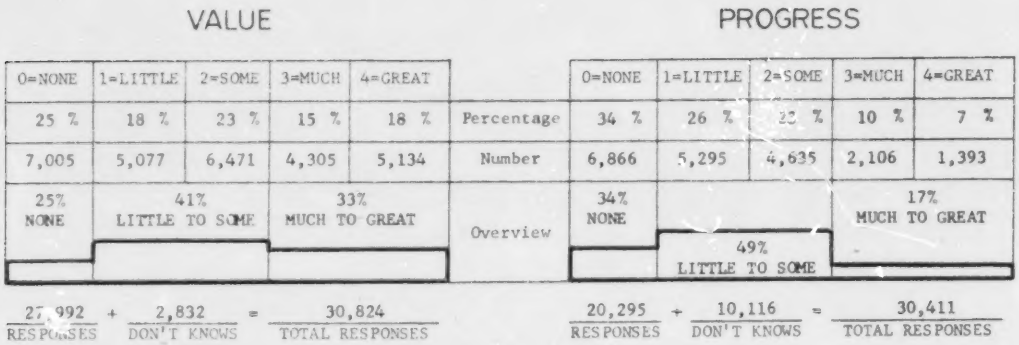
The overall value assigned to this item was among the lowest on the survey. Although 60% of the council respondents were in the "much to great" value column, no other group approached a majority in this value category.

"Much to great" value assessments were teachers, 29%; administrators, 33%; classified, 45%; PTA, 45%; other, 38%. Nevertheless, the progress-value gap on this item and the next was very slight. Most council members felt competent to assess this item with 97% giving their assessment of value and 84% their opinion of progress.

Among the comments related to this recommendation were:

> *I feel that decentralization perhaps affords more opportunities for local community persons to participate in the planning of more relevant curriculums for boys and girls.*
>
> *I question the value of allowing the parents to have such a large voice in the operation of a school.*

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR PLANNING THE BUDGET FOR THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM (Survey Item 36)



27,992 RESPONSES + 2,832 DON'T KNOWS = 30,824 TOTAL RESPONSES

20,295 RESPONSES + 10,116 DON'T KNOWS = 30,411 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 36)

The prevailing pattern of responses to the three preceding items continued to this item. While council members continued to lead other groups in their assessment of value, they were less enthusiastic about this recommendation ("much to great," 53%) than on the three preceding items.

One year ago, council respondents rated themselves relatively ineffective in carrying out this function. While progress this year was again viewed in the "little to some" range, only one-fifth (21%) of the council members saw no progress. Administrators saw about the same value as other groups on this item but felt less progress was being made.

Open-ended comments tended to reflect misunderstanding or ignorance about the "providing advice" part of these past four recommendations. There were some respondents who apparently thought the entire and

final responsibility for planning the school budget would be in the hands of advisory councils:

It does not seem realistic to have parents plan a budget.

It's like telling a doctor how much to spend for equipment... then evaluating his performance.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR DEFINING EDUCATIONAL GOALS (Survey Item 37)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
14 %	14 %	26 %	23 %	23 %	Percentage
3,895	3,989	7,377	6,416	6,546	Number
14% NONE	40% LITTLE TO SOME		46% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,223 RESPONSES + 2,411 DON'T KNOWS = 30,634 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
20 %	27 %	31 %	15 %	8 %	Percentage
4,343	5,832	6,733	3,230	1,707	Number
20% NONE	58% LITTLE TO SOME		23% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

21,845 RESPONSES + 8,457 DON'T KNOWS = 30,302 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 37)

As with all recommendations calling for greater community involvement in establishing the instructional program, this item received the strongest support from the community. Teachers were still less enthusiastic in their assessment of value and progress, but more than two-thirds (68%) of them saw at least "some" value in advisory council involvement in establishing educational goals. Administrators saw greater value ("much to great," 30%) in this recommendation than did teachers ("much to great," 17%) but were not as supportive as council members ("much to great," 42%).

Comments were also similar to those given to preceding recommendations, with staff questioning the desirability of asking council members to make in-depth decisions on the instructional program. Among the comments were:

Do parents have enough understanding of K-12 state requirements to satisfactorily establish adequate goals?

...major problem in this area is...to lessen public apathy.

Goal is a big bite. It's easier for SCAC to understand little needs that hopefully lead back to overall goals.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR EVALUATING THE SCHOOL AND ITS ACADEMIC EFFECTIVENESS (Survey Item 38)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
17 %	14 %	26 %	21 %	22 %	Percentage
4,700	3,999	7,387	5,877	6,333	Number
17% NONE	40% LITTLE TO SOME		43% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,296 RESPONSES + 2,283 DON'T KNOWS = 30,579 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
25 %	27 %	29 %	13 %	6 %	Percentage
5,362	5,720	6,210	2,725	1,383	Number
25% NONE	56% LITTLE TO SOME		19% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

21,400 RESPONSES + 8,882 DON'T KNOWS = 30,282 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 38)

One year ago, council members felt less involved and less effective in evaluating the school and its academic effectiveness than they did in any other board-enumerated advisory council function. On this survey, a wide majority (59%) saw at least "some" progress in implementing this recommendation. In assessing value, three-fourths (74%) of the council members were in the "much to great" column. Respondents from predominantly minority schools, as well as respondents with the least service, placed higher values on this item. Again, teachers saw less value and progress than did other groups. Administrators were in the middle value and progress ranges.

The open-ended concerns were similar in tone to the five preceding items, as shown here:

Non-educators do not have sufficient criteria to define educational goals.

What is definition of academic effectiveness? It seems like a sticky term where different groups might picture different things.

School-community advisory councils cannot evaluate the school and its academic effectiveness. They can only express their concerns and become better informed and vote.

This is not possible through a periodic evening meeting as now exists for SCAC's.

Only professional people should evaluate teachers.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR IMPROVING SCHOOL COMMUNICATIONS WITH PARENTS AND COMMUNITY (Survey Item 39)

	VALUE					PROGRESS				
	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
Percentage	4 %	5 %	13 %	26 %	52 %	13 %	26 %	32 %	18 %	11 %
Number	1,245	1,456	3,700	7,687	15,012	3,198	6,188	7,690	4,321	2,743
Overview	4% NONE	18% LITTLE TO SOME		78% MUCH TO GREAT		13% NONE	58% LITTLE TO SOME		29% MUCH TO GREAT	

29,100 RESPONSES + 1,575 DON'T KNOWS = 30,675 TOTAL RESPONSES

24,140 RESPONSES + 6,334 DON'T KNOWS = 30,474 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 39)

This recommendation received the highest value endorsement of any item in this section with more than half of all responses in the "great" category. Progress was also placed in the "much to great" column by almost one-third of all respondents (29%) and more than one-third (38%) of the council members.

The consistently high value assessment by both staff and community may be attributed to the fact that this function does not directly involve advisory councils in decision-making related to planning or evaluating a school's educational program.

Progress in achieving this recommendation appears to be related to school size; the smaller the school, the greater the progress. The high value accorded this recommendation reinforces the need for advisory council assistance in improving school-community communications.

Since all groups indicated their strong support of this recommendation, there were almost no open-ended comments.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD PARTICIPATE IN DECISION-MAKING BY PROVIDING ADVICE FOR INFORMING AND ADVISING SCHOOL STAFF REGARDING COMMUNITY CONDITIONS AND GOALS (Survey Item 40)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
5 %	6 %	16 %	28 %	45 %	Percentage
1,444	1,730	4,602	7,957	13,028	Number
5% NONE	22% LITTLE TO SOME		73% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

28,761 RESPONSES + 1,892 DON'T KNOWS = 30,653 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
17 %	27 %	31 %	16 %	10 %
3,857	6,253	7,053	3,706	2,233
17% NONE	58% LITTLE TO SOME		26% MUCH TO GREAT	

23,102 RESPONSES + 7,414 DON'T KNOWS = 30,516 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 40)

This was another recommendation in which there was considerable agreement about value. Almost three-fourths of all respondents were in the "much to great" value section. Progress was generally placed in the "little to some" range although nearly one-fourth of the overall progress response was "much to great." The responses indicate acceptance of the concept that the responsibility of conveying community concerns, suggestions and aspirations to the school staff is an important council function. Responses further show that council members living in the community are an important source of community information for staff who do not reside in that community.

As in the two preceding items, the lack of controversy over the role of this function is confirmed by the lack of open-ended comments.

SCHOOL-COMMUNITY ADVISORY COUNCILS SHOULD ASSIST IN PROVIDING SUPPORT TO PARENTS, TEACHERS, STUDENTS AND COMMUNITY FOR SCHOOL PROGRAMS (Survey Item 41)

VALUE

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT	
4 %	5 %	14 %	26 %	52 %	Percentage
1,034	1,353	3,991	7,683	15,064	Number
4% NONE	19% LITTLE TO SOME		78% MUCH TO GREAT		Overview

29,125 RESPONSES + 1,775 DON'T KNOWS = 30,900 TOTAL RESPONSES

PROGRESS

0=NONE	1=LITTLE	2=SOME	3=MUCH	4=GREAT
14 %	28 %	32 %	16 %	10 %
3,379	6,546	7,441	3,855	2,351
14% NONE	60% LITTLE TO SOME		26% MUCH TO GREAT	

23,572 RESPONSES + 6,995 DON'T KNOWS = 30,567 TOTAL RESPONSES

(Survey Item 41)

Once again, all responding groups saw great value and moderate progress, with council members and administrators being the most supportive. This indicates that both staff and community recognize the unique ability of an advisory council to mobilize community support for a variety of programs. Members of advisory councils were relatively positive in their assessment of progress in implementing this recommendation.

With some exceptions, comments were generally favorable. An exception follows:

> *While I think if advisory councils so desire to assist in providing support...their main job should be advisory...*

Additional Comments

The following comments, selected for their representativeness, reveal a considerable polarization of opinion about the degree of community participation necessary for an effective educational program and the desirability of mandated advisory councils. The comments selected for inclusion represent an almost equal distribution between district employees and community.

> *Just being invited to give an opinion gives people in the community a positive attitude toward the school.*
>
> *I appreciate meeting with all levels of schooling as we share the same problems and interests.*
>
> *Please do more to bring families and faculties, homes and schools together!*
>
> *We are attaining results with our efforts and with continuing success feel that there is no limit to the progress and achievement that could be attained. Count on us!*
>
> *The advisory council has become the tail that wags the dog.*
>
> *...leave it to professional educators! Also, the CAC...has proven to be a miserable failure (low attendance, apathy, general confusion). I strongly suggest eliminating this time-consuming, meaningless group.*
>
> *Teacher morale has declined drastically this year due to so-called "involvement" of the community.*
>
> *To blazes with advisory councils. They are nothing but gripe sessions for angry parents looking for someone else to blame for their children's lack of progress. Let me teach, give me a clean room, kids, books, quiet, and I'll do my job!*

The corporations must be run efficiently--schools have unlimited tax funds to spend--and do not answer to the stockholders. Taxpayers are quite unaware of how they should be run.

In general, it appears to me that when things are going well, our local administrator takes the glory, but when things are being complained about, "your advisory council is responsible for that."

In the process of decentralization, a good strong school-community relationship is encouraged. This is extremely healthy; however, community should always provide counsel and keep in mind that "education for the youngsters" is the main objective.

The more people you have making decisions, the longer the decisions will take and the less we will get accomplished.

I still believe the school-community advisory council concept can work.

I don't think the school advisory councils should be a mandated thing. It should be put to the community for a choice.

Advisory councils are being hamstrung by board regulations. If the councils are to provide any service to the schools they must be flexible.

Can we justify the value of having an advisory council and a PTA organization? Can we define separate but equal goals for each?

Parents and other citizens are just too busy with their various roles of life to get involved with advisory councils--not that they don't care.

The advisory council concept has theoretical value, but practically it is counter-productive. It demands an inordinate amount of time from staff and administration, is frustrating to lay people and professionals, and has not added anything constructive to the educational program or processes.

Correlate advisory council with PTA so that it can be a positive force helping our school.

I believe as a parent that we should be involved and informed, but we must leave technical decisions to trained personnel.

If there is any one single area that the district could most fruitfully provide help and guidance in, it is in convincing teachers that parents are not against them, just for their children.

School-community councils are only as effective as the administrator makes them.

More PTA involvement should be encouraged as a part of decentralization activities and program.

Community advisory councils need to be reminded their capacity is to advise.

We feel our school-community advisory council has been involved in busy work for the sake of the Board of Education meeting the requirements of decentralization.

The bulk of the really interested people are already serving the school through their PTA. They spend many, many hours of their time in tutoring, etc.

Show us that you are willing to work with us honestly and there will be no end to what we can accomplish.

I feel that PTA has been sold down the river.

General Observations

Meaningful community involvement in planning and evaluating the school educational program was viewed with some degree of apprehension by teachers and, to a lesser extent, by administrators. As a result, values placed on the recommendations--while high--in this section were lower than those in the three preceding sections.

Progress was most commonly placed in the "little to some" category, but the overall gap between value and progress was smaller than in other sections of this report.

Community groups attached significantly more value to the recommendations for community involvement than did other respondents and they also saw more evidence of progress in these areas.

Compared to last year, advisory council members seem to be less concerned with matters dealing with operational procedures and apparently feel more effective in carrying out their stated responsibilities.

Revisions in Board Rule 1370 and the School-Community Advisory Council Handbook have helped clarify operational and functional procedures for council members.

Recommendations related to the community giving input to schools, supporting school programs and disseminating information received more support than those more directly related to community involvement in educational planning or evaluation.

Responses to this year's survey indicated considerably more support for most of the recommendations, as well as more evidence of progress, than did the results of the advisory council survey conducted last year.

Respondents from schools in which minority students predominate generally saw greater value and progress in those recommendations providing for increased community participation in the school program.

Survey data indicate the district has certain obligations toward advisory councils. These include providing for staff development, assisting in council evaluation and making current information about the district readily available to councils.

SECTION V

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES: DECENTRALIZATION, THE JOB, THE SCHOOL AND THE SYSTEM

Nearly one-fifth of those who participated in the survey volunteered additional comments. Many of the 5,540 open-ended answer sheet responses were related directly to survey items, others dealt with the entire decentralization process, and others were addressed to areas not normally associated with decentralization.

Regardless of the subject matter of the comment, each was read, often by several task force members. Comments were analyzed in terms of their content and frequency.

Given this opportunity for unrestricted comment, respondents were often critical, sometimes supportive, and always frank in expressing their feelings and concerns about decentralization, as well as such other areas as the school, the district, teachers and teaching, red tape, the survey itself, administrators, and advisory councils. The survey was enhanced by the willingness of staff and community to express their concerns and suggestions for improving the educational program in the district.

What About Decentralization?

Nearly one-third of all the open-ended responses related to the decentralization process. Many of these comments expressed the view that decentralization wasn't making any difference in the educational process. For example:

> *I see little or no effect of the decentralization program in our school.*
>
> *Stop talking about decentralization and implement more local control by principal and community.*
>
> *In short, decentralization is almost totally invisible from the classroom.*

Many comments reported progress:

> *It's working.*
>
> *It has encouraged innovative programs. It has helped in security problems. It has brought more parents into the school picture. It has brought aides for the classroom.*
>
> *Decentralization seems to be beneficial; however, there is much progress to be made.*

See great and constructive change in ability of parents and community not only to modify school's goals and functions but to contribute to the school's operation as aides, teachers, resource people. Growing feeling of participating, therefore, belonging to the educational process...

The principal and teachers seem more willing to experiment and innovate with education--less fearful of "what downtown will think" and tend not to block off new ideas with city-wide rules and regulations that prohibit them, as was the case in the past. The real gain of decentralization seems to be that both principal and teachers seem freer to try new things and are therefore freer from administrative rules and regulations. This freeing of principal and teachers may be one of the real achievements of decentralization in the sense that they now feel that it is legitimate to meet the needs of their local constituency.

The number who reported progress was almost balanced by those who just didn't like the whole idea of decentralization. Here are some dissident comments:

I feel that decentralization has gone far enough, if not too far already, from my standpoint as a taxpayer.

Please DON'T further decentralize. New York and other cities have found that too extensive decentralization, especially when done too rapidly, has caused more problems than it has solved.

It would seem to me that this method is more a waste of time and money than it is beneficial.

I feel decentralization is a divide and conquer scheme to weaken both the curriculum of children and the professionalization of teachers.

Decentralization has not done one good thing for education.

A relatively small group of those commenting on decentralization felt that rather than being effective, the decentralization process was making matters worse. These comments included:

We have changed from a good centralized operation to a cheap and shoddy decentralization operation.

Flexibility allows each level to become inflexible its own way. Decentralization is a washout.

Some respondents didn't care to evaluate decentralization; they simply wanted to offer a bit of advice or express a concern:

Teachers make the system "go." If they are not satisfied, then decentralization and all other programs are meaningless. When the grocery store clerk, the baggage handler, the tire changer have more purchasing power than the teacher who can only bemoan his profession and cannot dedicate himself to the principles he has spent six years in college to learn, HELP!!

I hope the district will maintain some loose guidelines so that everyone won't just go off in a different direction. Do-your-own-thing has been carried too far in some ways.

I am a new teacher and I feel that little or no effort has been made to help inform me of many of the items on the survey sheet.

With all the advantages of decentralization the school board still has too much power to do what they want. Issues which are discussed and surveyed in the schools and areas still can be controlled by a few board members who bend to the wishes of small pressure groups.

What About Other Concerns?

School district employees had not had a chance like this since 1953 to offer their reactions on any subject of interest to them. They took full advantage of this opportunity. Some comments were illustrated, some were typed, most were handwritten. There were expressions of anger, humor and frustration; all pointed to areas respondent felt required attention and action.

Although there were many positive and supportive comments relating to other sections of the survey, those appearing in this section were understandably more critical.

For instance, the classroom and the problems of teaching elicited a large number of responses since more than 19,000 of the survey respondents were teachers. These comments included:

Where has decentralization lowered class size?

All the instructional materials, innovative programs, specialists, etc., will do little to improve the education of our children until we put forth the determination to cut down the classroom sizes whether a "high need" or "low need" area--and realize the lower classroom norms.

Why not put the money into the local schools (instead of area offices)? We need it in the schools to help us clerically and for teaching positions!

Custodial services have deteriorated seriously.

Decentralization of library and audio-visual services was a mistake.

Decentralization has only created more work and more reports for the school offices.

We're not trusted as professionals. We're ignored in the decision-making process. Our needs are ignored and we're underpaid!

There were respondents who testified to greater involvement in school affairs and decision-making. Hope was expressed that decentralization would give teachers more involvement in the future. For example:

There has been a marked increase in participation in planning and evaluating school functions, increased awareness of teacher goals and views, and generally greater access to the principal...

I believe that the program that is being conducted is of great interest for the teaching of children. This is the first time I have had a chance to give my opinion. Thanks.

Decentralization has helped in many areas--teaching to fit specific needs of our school.

Some respondents blamed "administrators," staff or board policy for teaching frustrations. Here are some sample comments:

We feel we are trained professionals and we should be treated as such.

This has been a year to end all years with the Stull Act, Vasconcellos, etc. It seems we have less and less time to work with the children.

Let's have less pressure on the teachers from every direction and more help!!

Teachers feel less knowledgeable now than ever before--no one ever tells us anything.

Before decentralization I felt in touch with other teachers in my subject and what they were teaching. Not anymore.

More personal attention, please!

It is my feeling that teachers have become cynical, justifiably so, because of what they feel is a lack of sharing by the administrators of this district.

The Board of Education has such little regard for the morale and well being that I can't feel that you really care, or would be influenced by my lowly opinion.

Today's youngsters demand more personal attention from their teachers. This is a logical phenomenon that seems to go unrecognized at the administrative level.

Everybody wants to have a say in running the schools, but they want the teachers to be accountable for the schools' failures.

There were many comments about surveys, in general, and this one in particular. Some wondered about the expense of this survey. Others felt no one would use the results. Some said they didn't have enough time to respond or that little preparation was given for it. Many failed to recognize a relationship between their own welfare and someone else's need for information. However, some said "thanks" for the opportunity. Among the comments were:

This assessment technique is quite appropriate and well needed. It provides two-way or multi-way communication so necessary if opinions are to be heard and changes are to be made effectively!

I wonder if the results of all of these surveys are really used to effect changes in policies, procedures and principles.

Some respondents saw a real disparity between what has happened in the decentralization process and what they thought would happen. Some respondents indicated they expected to see smaller classes, a saving of money and fewer people outside the classroom.

Many said decentralization means more administrators, an overlapping of services, an increase in red tape and bureaucracy. For example:

There is the same bureaucratic red tape that existed before decentralization.

Too many chiefs--the Indians are confused.

Decentralization is just another name for more administration and less education which should be, after all, the main goal of any school district.

Respondents had many ideas on how money should be spent as these comments illustrate:

We do not need a top-heavy administrative structure. We need smaller classrooms, more teacher-specialists, more counselors and more personnel to deal directly with child, parents, and community.

Decentralization has promoted more...support people in offices scattered around the district but has not strengthened the individual school's educational program.

The cost of personnel to function the decentralized services must be exorbitant.

An overlapping of roles and services was another concern as these comments show:

> *Many of the administrative area and district personnel have overlapping roles; some of these positions could be eliminated.*
>
> *Duplication of effort seems to exist. The communication between the central offices and the area offices appears to be poor.*

In short, many people viewed decentralization as too much administration, the unwise spending of money, an overlapping of roles and services and increased workload for people in the schools. Their comments included:

> *It has created a very heavy workload for administrators and office personnel. Very little in-service training or compensation has been given to alleviate these extra duties.*
>
> *...suddenly a principal is required to be a business manager instead of principal. They are deluged with bulletins changing some procedures, budget reports, planning for expenditures, and an avalanche of reports on trivia. Put the principals back in their offices to help teachers.*

In Conclusion

The message from the open-ended comments appeared to be:

> Give us a chance to offer an opinion more often and show us that you listen to what we say.
>
> Decentralization may be the way to go but we've got problems. We need more information.
>
> Don't let us become isolated in our own schools and areas.
>
> Many of us don't really understand why we're decentralizing or what to expect from decentralization.
>
> Many of us expected decentralization to result in smaller classes, readily available curriculum help--things just a little closer to the school. So far we're disappointed.
>
> We want the community to participate but not dictate.
>
> Decentralization sounds like a positive course for the district--let's get on with it.

Recommendations

The views expressed in these comments indicate a need to respond promptly and effectively to the attitudes and concerns voiced in the open-ended response aspect of this survey. Therefore, it is recommended that the district:

--Provide the information really needed so that decentralization is more fully understood.

--Take positive action to avoid increasing administrative assignments.

--Take immediate action to provide direct communication to and from the "Hill" people and the schools.

--Take a hard look at conditions that may be producing feelings of isolation, non-involvement, frustration and helplessness among school personnel and community members.

--Make every effort to provide tangible evidence that someone "up there" or "down there" really cares.

--Provide more frequent opportunities for employees and community members to make "open-ended" comments.

SECTION VI

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

1. The overall results of the survey indicate much value, some progress.

Most of the 61 goals and recommendations adopted to promote decentralization in the Los Angeles City Schools were endorsed by staff and community as having "much" value. This assessment was made according to a scale on which value could be rated as "none," "little," "some," "much" or "great." Of the 23 survey items that were not placed in the "much" value category, 14 were rated as having "great" value, and 9 were seen as having "some" value.

Using the same scale, respondents assessed the progress of each of 47 implemented items. In most cases, progress was placed in the "some to little" range. A further breakdown shows that respondents saw "some" progress being made in the remaining 14 items.

Despite some variations in opinions, the overall consistency of the responses reaffirms the high value staff and community place on the recommendations. Although progress was not generally assessed as being in the same "much to great" range as value, respondents did see progress being made toward carrying out every implemented goal and recommendation on the survey.

Implication: Staff and community endorse the decentralization goals and recommendations, but there is a need to narrow the gap between the high value of the goals and recommendations and the rate of progress being made to achieve them.

2. There is district-wide concurrence on the value of recommendations affecting only certain segments of the district.

Recommendations to give greater benefits to certain areas of the district (such as urban teacher specialist, bilingual remuneration, extra resources for "high-need" schools, special considerations for "low-need" schools) were strongly supported on a district-wide basis regardless of the ethnic or geographic variables.

Implication: Programs that merit support will receive widespread staff and community endorsement on the basis of their worth to the district as a whole, rather than on the degree of individual gain.

3. Innovation, coupled with staff and community involvement, is welcomed.

Recommendations for experimental and innovative practices and

procedures were generally well accepted by staff and community. However, reservations expressed in the open-ended comments indicated that information and the opportunity for input must precede implementation, and opportunity for reaction and evaluation must follow.

Implication: Increased staff and community in-service training must precede the introduction of innovative programs, as well as the continuous opportunity to provide input and evaluation.

4. Community respondents see higher value and more progress in decentralization than do staff.

School-community advisory council members and PTA respondents consistently reported higher value and progress than did staff in each section of the survey. Considerable advisory council-PTA agreement was evident in both value and progress ratings for most of the goals and recommendations on the survey.

Implication: Since PTA and advisory council members tend to agree on the value of decentralization recommendations, their cooperative efforts should be actively encouraged in narrowing the gap between value and progress.

5. The community wants involvement with staff in the decision-making process.

Responses from community members indicate a desire for increased involvement in the decision-making process on a partnership basis with staff. School-community advisory councils appear to be less concerned about problems of operational procedures and more concerned with functional responsibilities.

Implication: Community wants to work with local school staff in developing the school's educational program.

6. The greatest progress is being made in implementing recommendations related to local school flexibility.

The overall survey responses placed the highest progress ratings on expanded opportunities for staff and community to respond to educational needs at the local school level (local school flexibility).

Implication: Staff and community are most aware of those aspects of decentralization that are being manifested at the local school level.

7. Recommendations dealing with communications have the greatest gap between value and progress.

Items in the communications section received a high value but a

lower progress response than did items listed in any of the three other sections (instructional improvement, local school flexibility and community participation).

Implication: Careful consideration should be given to increasing the resources needed to improve two-way communications.

8. The "don't know" responses need further analysis.

The number of "don't know" responses indicates a follow-up study is needed to analyze the relationship between the survey item and the size of the role group which did not feel qualified to evaluate the recommendation.

Implication: An informational program should be designed to meet the needs revealed by an analysis of the "don't know" responses.

9. Specific areas need special attention.

While survey results indicate that efforts should continue to implement all 61 items, it is apparent that special attention should be directed toward the following areas:

--Improving two-way communications and, to the extent possible, localizing communication services.

--Expanding in-service training for community and staff.

--Evaluating the effectiveness of paraprofessionals in the local school independent of funding considerations.

--Increasing the number of resource teachers, counselors and teacher-coordinators and providing more explicit statements of their qualifications and responsibilities.

--Improving supportive services (maintenance, clerical, operational) so teachers will feel better served.

--Providing all staff with more information on the benefits of community participation in decision-making at the local school level.

--Securing the funding necessary to implement the highly endorsed unimplemented recommendations.

--Continuing to evaluate various criteria (in addition to enrollment) for the allocation of resources to the local schools.

Implication: The specific items mentioned above are of high priority and should be so considered in future budgetary decisions.

10. Staff and community are deeply concerned with the educational program.

One of the most encouraging results of the entire survey for the future of the district was the willingness of staff and community to cooperate in evaluating the 61 survey items. More than 32,000 people took the time to participate. Of these, more than 5,000 volunteered comments on the open-ended response sheets.

Implication: Regular opportunities for "open-ended" input from both staff and community should be provided, and the results of this input should be disseminated on a district-wide basis.

LOS ANGELES UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT
Office of the Superintendent
Education and Management Assessment

ASSESSMENT OF PROGRESS IN DECENTRALIZATION
SURVEY FORM
May, 1973

INFORMATION ON SURVEY

This survey was prepared, at the request of the Superintendent, by a task force of teachers and administrators for the purpose of assessing the District's progress in decentralization during the past year.

The information which your responses provide will be evaluated by the task force and used in making further recommendations for achieving the goals of decentralization. A summary of the study will be prepared for school personnel and for the community.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SURVEY

1. Materials needed are: (a) Survey Form, (b) Machine-Scored Answer Sheet, (c) Open-Ended Response Sheet, and (d) No. 2 pencil.

2. Please follow the instructions provided in each section of this survey.

3. Please mark each item by filling in completely the space between the lines provided for each response. (Example: ■) Mark heavily with pencil. Mistakes should be carefully erased.

4. An opportunity for additional comments (optional) is provided on a separate sheet marked "Open-Ended Response."

The data requested in the identification section (right side) of answer sheet and on the open-ended response sheet should be filled out according to the following instructions: (Omit school data if you are not located in a school.)

1. Primary Role - Fill in the response block which best describes your primary identification with the school or District. No individual should fill out more than one survey even though he may have more than a single role relationship with the school or District.

2. Years of Service in Role - Fill in the response block which indicates the number of years of service in the role.

3. Location - Fill in the response block which identifies your location.

4. Size of School - Fill in the response block which indicates student enrollment of your school.

5. Administrative Area - Fill in the response block indicating your area.

6. School Ethnic Composition - Fill in the response block indicating the largest ethnic student group in your school.

7. School Ethnic Percentage - Fill in the response block which indicates the percentage of the ethnic group indicated in item 6.

A. GENERAL GOALS

Please evaluate each of the Nine Decentralization Goals in terms of VALUE and PROGRESS. These goals are to:

V	P	
?	?	Don't Know
0	0	None
1	1	Little
2	2	Some
3	3	Much
4	4	Great

1. Help schools present an educational program suited to local needs.
2. Increase the responsiveness of schools and the school system.
3. Extend more autonomy and opportunity for effective decision-making to local schools.
4. Maintain an open structure to facilitate the involvement of parents, local residents, pupils, teachers and school administrators.
5. Encourage desirable change and innovation.
6. Establish means for continual reevaluation of each school's priorities.
7. Raise the school system's efficiency and economy to the highest level possible.
8. Emphasize the kindergarten through twelfth grade as a continuous and coordinated educational program.
9. Improve communication within the school system and with those it serves.

B. RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED

The following are recommendations which have been adopted to help achieve these goals. Please indicate the VALUE you attach to each and PROGRESS being made in your school and area.

V	P	
?	?	Don't Know
0	0	None
1	1	Little
2	2	Some
3	3	Much
4	4	Great

10. Instructional materials needed by schools should be developed by the District curriculum staff when requested.
11. Accountability for staff development (in-service training in the areas of administration, the instructional program or community participation) must be clearly established.
12. In-service classes for teachers should be part of any plan for instructional improvement.
13. In-service classes for administrators should be part of any plan for instructional improvement.
14. School staff should be involved in determining instructional priorities.
15. Secondary students should be involved in determining instructional priorities.
16. Community should be involved in determining instructional priorities.
17. The development of a District-wide instructional plan should provide for input from business and industry.
18. The development of a District-wide instructional plan should provide for input from colleges and universities.
19. Governmental agencies and private foundations should be encouraged to provide funding and other support for the instructional program.
20. The effectiveness of instructional plans should be evaluated regularly.
21. Curriculum resource teachers assigned to elementary schools have helped improve instructional programs. (Elementary response only)
22. The instructional program is improved by converting teaching positions into salaries for para-professionals who perform school-related tasks.
23. Restrictions must be removed so that Department Chairmen will have adequate time to perform the support functions necessary to improve the instructional program. (Secondary response only)

RECOMMENDATIONS ADOPTED (Cont.)

V	P	
?	?	Don't Know
0	0	None
1	1	Little
2	2	Some
3	3	Much
4	4	Great

24. Present restrictions should be modified so that teacher coordinators could be assigned on a basis of specific needs of an individual school. (Secondary response only)
25. Decentralization has resulted in increased budget flexibility at the local school.
26. The decentralization of supportive services (maintenance, clerical, operational) should result in improved services to local schools.
27. Advisory councils operate more democratically because of revised guidelines for School-Community Advisory Councils (Board Rule 1370).
28. The revised 1973 School-Community Advisory Council Handbook, which is an attempt to condense and clarify democratic procedures for advisory councils, is an important information source for council members.
29. The District should provide assistance when advisory councils measure their operations and effectiveness.
30. District support to local councils is necessary to increase community participation.
31. Staff development in community participation must be provided for school administrators.
32. A training program in effective community participation should be provided for school community advisory councils.

School-Community Advisory Councils should participate in decision making by providing advice for:

33. Assessing educational needs.
34. Establishing educational priorities.
35. Planning the educational program.
36. Planning the budget for the educational program.
37. Defining educational goals.
38. Evaluating the school and its academic effectiveness.
39. Improving school communication with parents and community.
40. Informing and advising school staff regarding community conditions and goals.
41. School-community advisory councils should assist in providing support to parents, teachers, students, and community for school programs.
42. Policy and procedural bulletins relating to kindergarten through twelfth grade structure should be updated and brought together for easy reference.
43. The District should design an outline (profile) for each school to use in identifying the strengths and needs of the school and the community.
44. The publication of "The Los Angeles School Observer" provides current information about the District helpful to advisory councils.
45. Basic knowledge and current information about the operation of the District must be provided to advisory council members at the local school level.
46. The District's communication system should be restructured to provide effective two-way communication between employees and those served by local schools.
47. Communications services should be available in the field service centers and the local complexes or clusters.

C. RECOMMENDATIONS NOT YET IMPLEMENTED

The following are recommendations made by the Decentralization Task Force in 1971 but not yet adopted. Please indicate the VALUE you attach to each recommendation.

?	Don't Know
0	None
1	Little
2	Some
3	Much
4	Great

48. Each school should receive a budget from the State for District or State approved (K-8) textbooks to meet local needs.
49. A Superintendent's Fund for Innovation would encourage personnel to seek alternative solutions to educational problems.
50. The District should make available a pre-kindergarten program for all children in the District from age 3 years 9 months to 4 years 9 months.
51. Evaluation of the needs of a school should be based on some or all of the following: enrollment, absence rate, non-permanent teachers, transiency rate, assessed valuation (single family dwelling), reading scores and ethnic background.
52. Norm tables (teacher-pupil ratio) for the assignment of teachers should be developed based upon the following: enrollment, absence rate, non-permanent teachers, transiency, assessed valuation (single family dwelling), reading scores and ethnic background.
53. Teachers newly assigned to high need schools (many problems and needs) should be provided with a paid five-day staff development (training) program.
54. Additional personnel, as determined by local school staff and community, should also be considered in budget allocations for low need (fewer problems and needs) schools.
55. Teacher-coordinators (teachers who receive extra salary for additional responsibilities) should be assigned to elementary schools on an enrollment basis. (Elementary response only)
56. Additional teacher-coordinator positions should be assigned to secondary schools on an enrollment basis. (Secondary response only)
57. Additional counselors for elementary schools should be assigned to each of the 12 areas. (Elementary response only)
58. Additional counselors should be assigned to secondary schools on an enrollment basis. (Secondary response only)
59. Urban teacher specialists (selected teachers whose background, training, and experience especially qualifies them to work with children in high-need schools) are an important staff requirement and should receive additional salary.
60. Teachers who meet the need to communicate bilingually in the learning process should receive additional salary.
61. The Board of Education should create experimental complexes and demonstration schools.

D. OPEN ENDED RESPONSE (OPTIONAL)

If you wish to make additional comments including specific strengths and weaknesses of decentralization in your school or area, please do so on the separate sheet provided.

Primary Role	Years of Service in Role
Teacher -- []	0-3 ----- []
Admin. --- []	4-10 ---- []
Class.---- []	Over 10 - []
PTA ------ []	
SCAC ----- []	
Other ---- []	

Location
Elementary ---------- []
Secondary ---------- []
Adult ---------- []
Special Education ----- []
Area Office ---------- []
Field Serv. Ctr. ------ []
Other Admin. Office --- []

Size of School	Admin. Area
Under 500 ----- []	A []
500-1000 ------ []	B []
1001-1500 ----- []	C []
1501-2500 ----- []	D []
Over 2500 ----- []	E []
	F []
	G []
	H []
	I []
	J []
	K []
	L []

School Ethnic Composition
Black --------- []
Oriental ------ []
Spanish Surname []
Other White --- []

School Ethnic Percentage
0-20 ---------- []
21-40 --------- []
41-60 --------- []
61-80 --------- []
81-100 -------- []